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ANNA J. LINDGREN

WITH HIM

CHICAGO-BLADET
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Dedication

To the men and women who pointed me to Christ,
because they themselves were undeniable
facts about Him, I lovingly dedicate
this little book, grown out of my
experience "with Him".

Introduction

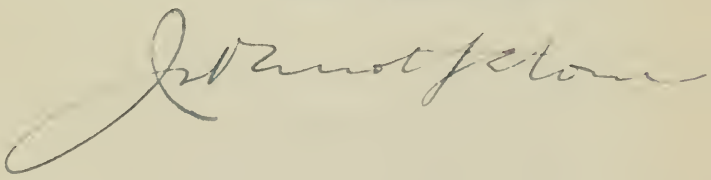
"With Him" by Anna J. Lindgren I have read with great interest and profit. Her life has been a song and psalm to all who have known her. Her Master has indeed been with her, and her heart has burned within her as she has talked with Him in the way. The experiences and meditations have been those of one who has been living in the presence of her Lord. They will vitalize for others faith and creed.

Only those to whom we give our lives in service do we fully understand. Anna Lindgren has given her life to others, as she gave it to God, and through this gift she has been given an insight into and a sympathy with those among whom she has labored.

The little book will do good and send sunshine into many hearts.

Faithfully,

John Timothy Stone.



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Meditations

By the Manger

"Let us now go even unto Bethlehem."—Luke 2:15.

"DARK the night of sin had settled." To bring Light into that darkness God came to Bethlehem. God! How I have tried to comprehend that fact—tried in vain. I have listened to the voice of God, in the morning of time, as He spoke His creative words, "Let there be," and I have seen worlds flung into space, suns come into existence, the "Milky Way" span the measureless deep, and the countless orbs of light spring forth, at His bidding, and in dazed wonder I have cried out, "God!" And I stand by cloud-capped Sinai when He speaks in thunder and lightning, and in trembling awe I cry, "God!" And when I see His fingerprints on the pages of the world's history, how dynasties and great powers come and go to serve His purposes, that know of no thwarting, then my mind pays its highest tribute and I say, "God!" And as I listen to the great melodies "echoing down the corridors of time" from Seers and Poets, my soul cries out, "God!" And when I behold Thee, O Thou great Savior of mine, and see

how at Thy word the stormy sea is calmed, the foul leprosy cleansed, the lame walk, the cripples made straight, the mute speak, the deaf hear, the blind see, the dead come back to life, and hypocrisy silenced, unhesitatingly I cry, "God!"

But when I come "even unto Bethlehem" with its lowing oxen, its straw and its manger, and behold a helpless babe, my soul is too perplexed for words. I hear the angels' glory-song, and as I gaze upwards I catch a glimpse of a radiance that dazzles and a blinding light, and I see that the song that ripples down from heaven is sung by countless millions of adoring angels. And then I hear a babe's cry and see a little cheek dewy with tears, and my heart melts within me. I see the shepherds come, and hear their story, and deep down in my heart re-echoes like some mighty organ-music the angels' message, "For unto you is born this day a Savior which is Christ the Lord." And when I see the Wise Men bring their gifts and worship, my one dominating desire is to bring a gift worthy my God. But what can I bring unto the One to whom all things belong? And if all the glory my mind can picture were mine to give, what a useless gift to the God who emptied Himself of a glory too great for my mind to fathom, too dazzling for my eye to behold. No, there is only one gift worthy of giving—that is mine to give—undying love, unbroken allegiance, ceaseless praise.

I want to stand by the Manger long enough for

all my foolish pride to die, all my vainglory to vanish, and my estimate of values to become adjusted to the Humility that is God.

"Lord, here I bring myself,
'Tis all I have to give,
My heart's desire is wholly this,
Henceforth for Thee to live;

"To own no will but Thine,
To suffer loss or shame,
All things to bear, if only I
May glorify Thy name;

"Henceforth mine every power
Each day for Thee to use,
My hands, my feet, my lips, mine all,
As Thou, my Lord, shalt choose.

"Dear Lord, my constant prayer
Is for increase of grace,
That I by faith may walk with Thee,
Till I behold Thy face."

G. W. Seibert.

A New Year's Meditation

"A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."—Isa. 32:2.

THE MILLENNIUM is ever nearing! Let me not forget it! Let the thought so take possession of me, this New Year's night, that the Light of Eternity might fall over the commonplace, that my perspective may be truer and my horizon wider. I live in the valley where the little people live, but this night take me up on the mountain peak. I know the descent will be lonely and steep, but I would get up at any cost. I would, by Thy grace, look back over the winding path of my last year and see in how much it followed Thy way for me. I need the consciousness of Thy nearness to dare that look. I need the loving touch of Thy hand on mine, assuring me of sin forgiven and fellowship restored, or despair will seize me—in that look. I need to come very close up to "the Old Rugged Cross" tonight. So close, that I can feel its awful reality and know that "the foundation of my faith standeth sure".

"Beneath the Cross of Jesus I fain would take my stand,
The shadow of a mighty Rock, within a weary land;
A home within the wilderness, a rest upon the way
From the burning of the noon-tide heat, and the burden
of the day.

"I take, O Cross, thy shadow, for my abiding place;
I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of His face,
Content to let the world go by, to know no gain nor loss,
My sinful self my only shame, my glory all the Cross."

My shame, as I look back, is that I gloried so little in the Cross. I gloried more in the knowledge I had and the sermons I preached about it, in the friends it brought me and the freedom and privileges it afforded. And throughout all Eternity I shall never, never, never be able to put into that year the glory of the Cross that rightly belonged there. Oh, my Lord, how many are they, back there, who failed to see the glory of the Cross because of an "unemphasized or wrongly emphasized word of mine"?

With the Seer I stand on the Mount of Vision. Centuries and decades of centuries have passed. His "Man of Sorrows" is no longer a Vision or a Hope but the Light that clarifies what still is a vision. Ah, my Lord, I have more than Isaiah! I can stand with Thee on the Mount of Vision! How my heart glows and worships as Thy nailprinted hand points toward the Eastern horizon.

Dawn is near. New Year, you will bring it

nearer! What matters if you take me down solitary trails to dark valleys! What matters pain and weakness and the winds from hell! Thou art coming. And while I wait for Thy glorious appearing Thou art holding my hand. Let me glory in Thee and Thy Cross. Thou art even now my "Hiding place" and a "Covert from the tempest"; Thou art "Rivers of water in a dry place" and the "Shadow of a great Rock in a weary land".

I need Thee with a deep, yearning need this year. Last year's experience humiliates me. I would not have it repeated. It silences my lips, as I would speak out strong words, pledging loyalty and undivided devotion. I can only say, "Let every word of mine find its illustration in my life". And let me know "the fury of an on-rushing, all-dominating conviction"!

"I would not be as mist of moisture born
  Tc wraith-like fade away at look of sun,
But stand at midnight, even, noon or morn,
  As does the mountain o'er which seasons run.

"I would not be as driftwood on the tide,
  Uncharted derelict upon the wave,
But as a rock swift water to divide,
  O'er which the billows impotently rave.

"I would not subject be to every whim
  Begotten of the world's uncertain mood,
But loyal at all times be found to Him,
  Lord of the Stable, Workshop and the Rood."

W. B. Hinson.

Is It True?

MASTER, there is a question surging through my heart and mind with a power as irresistible as the ocean-tide sweeping the shore. I bring it to Thee. To whom beside Thee could I bring it and expect an authoritative answer? Men have tried to settle it but have only succeeded in adding to my confusion of mind and uneasiness of heart. Their answers are as varied as their understanding is dull.

Once two men followed Thee. At Thy invitation they spent a few hours with Thee—and walked out revolutionized. One of them wrote the fourth gospel and three epistles, and at the eventide of his life he stood on the lone isle of Patmos and looked through the pearly gates of the foursquare city of God, and the tale of his vision thrills me as it has thrilled millions upon millions of weary pilgrims in two millenniums. And the other of the two went out from Thy presence with a conviction that won heady, stubborn Peter. As I think of that visit and its far-reaching consequences I wonder—did I ever truly spend an hour with Thee?

I see how one day a hated and ill-reputed publican came face to face with Thee, received Thy call and followed. And to him was given the vision of Thee as the covenanted King, and he writes the gospel for his own proud nation. And I wonder—did I ever stand face to face with Thee?

And I see how one day a woman in daring love disregarded all written and unwritten laws of society of her day and, facing the scorn and contempt of hypocritical leaders, performed an act of faith that shall be remembered throughout time and eternity—and I ask, is what I feel for Thee worthy the name of love?

But there is another figure that even more strangely grips me. It is that of a tall young nobleman who must have been very lovely, for when Thou beheld him Thou loved him. His longing was as deep as mine, for it led him to seek Thee. His sincerity could not be questioned, for he recognized Thee whom his class rejected. His faith was great, for he accepted Thy answer as final. Why then is it that he today—and in all the centuries past—stands out as the one who made "the great refusal"? What would he not have become had he followed Thee? In one respect I am certainly not like him, for I am not turning back. I dare not walk alone. "The night is dark, and I am far from home." But what is it I am holding back? What riches am I trusting in? What sweet hopes for this life am I

clinging to? Whose scorn do I fear; whose praise do I covet? Is it that my soul is not big enough to hold a conviction long enough to be possessed by it? I walk in the midst of a people who are lost "in the maddening maze of things", and in my life there is nothing that makes them desire Thee. I hear through the centuries the tramp, tramp, tramp of the army of God. They walk through the world but do not belong to it. "They held not their life dear unto themselves." They plucked the eye out, when it offended. They cut the right arm, when it hindered. They limped on one foot, that they might be overcomers. Master, this is the heart of my question: Why do I not belong to them?

Enduring

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."—II Tim. 2:3.

"TO let slip the soul in the flooding strife, as 'Advance' the bugles cry...." is a desirable and glorious death, if of the long weary years that went before I can say, "I have fought a good fight... I have kept the faith."

There was many a crisis time in my life, when eternal values hung in the balance; but not at such times did I meet the supreme test of character, or loyalty to Thee, my Lord. That test comes to me in the weary round of multitudinous and monotonous duties, when no bugles sound their "haughty cry", and when the thrill of the conflict has passed. It comes in the early morn, when my body cries louder for more sleep than my soul cries for Thee. "How hard it ofttimes is to see the dawn and gird up the soul for another day's high daring?" It comes when all the odds are against me; when the comrade turns his back, the friend fails, the loved one misunderstands, and failure is inevitable. It comes when my lips fain would speak words of righteous indignation

while in my heart the still small voice whispers, "The servant of the Lord must be gentle unto all men." It comes—not so much when others have wronged me—as when I have wronged them, and my testimony has lost the ring of truth, or is silenced.

How shall I learn to endure? How shall I know the fortitude that is more than patient endurance, the strength to endure with courage, the power to suffer without yielding? How shall I learn to stand firm and do my task, regardless of what others may do or say? How shall I "keep fast grip on my own respect, not let slip my own integrity, keep my lips truthful in the midst of liars, my course straight though little tricksters appear to win?"

If ever I learn it, I must learn it from Thee, "who endured the cross, despising the shame." Point out to me the secret of Thine endurance, that I may make it mine.

First, I find clearly that Thou didst know who Thou wert. Men say that Thou didst not, but men are wrong, for from Thine own lips I hear, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life"—"I and my Father are one" —"I am the Bread of Life, he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Thou didst know, and I, would I endure, must know who I am. I *do* know when I look upon the Cross, and that is why I must never lose sight of it.

In the second place, I find that Thou didst know Thy mission. They tell me that Thou didst not, but they are wrong. When they speak of "the disaster of the crucifixion" they are ignorant of the fact that before the foundation of the world Thou wert the Lamb of God; and they stupidly ignore that early in Thy earthly ministry the "must" of the cross was on Thy lips.

What is *my* mission? There is a word in Thy Book that comes nearer to it than any I know. It is very deep, and I admit that I do not understand it, but it grips and thrills and awes me. "That I may know....the fellowship of His sufferings." This I know about Thy sufferings: their cause was never found in Thyself. It was my sin that forced the blood sweat on Thy brow. Teach, O teach me, my Savior, my mission, that I may endure!

Then I find that Thou endured because of the joy set before Thee. "And the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one"—"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory"—"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ"—"Wherefore....let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith."

Keeping Steady

"Believe Me."—John 14:11.

IT is true that we make little progress. It is true that the dancehall, the theater and the deadly indifference hold the crowd that needs our message. It is true that we are a laughing-stock to the world. It is true that we are strangers in a foreign land. It is true that we are weak and human, separating over details and quibbling over non-essentials. But it is also true—and let the truth ring until it grips, and penetrates, and holds our very souls—*we are triumphant!* Defeat can never come to God. *He* never revised His plan. He rules, and His purpose will be carried out in its entirety. And I am part of that eternal purpose. If I truly believed it I would be made "steady as the mountain, uncompromising as the seas, and unfrightened as the solemn stars of the night."

Discouraged, weary, lonely one, you who have tried and failed, and failed only to try again, it is to you I write, it is for you I pray, and I bring you a message from the heart of God: "Believe Me." Your problem is a real one, and difficult, but no

difficulty exists with Him who by a word flung the stars into space. Your sorrow is great, and greater because you must bear it in silence without the sympathy of friends, but tenderly "the Man of Sorrows" calls to you, "Believe *Me*," and your sorrow is His.

Let me tell you how this message came to me, some time ago. I stood by three open graves. Such unspeakable sorrow came to our little valley. One of our young men, in the flower and strength of his manhood, was hurled into eternity. As I stood by that still form, in the evening, his comrades came silently filing up around me, and when I looked from that stark, bruised face up to theirs I found them white with fear and awe, and no one had a jest to offer when I quietly asked, "Boys, is it not well to be prepared for an emergency like this?" Then, my tired friend, I thought of you, perhaps because I too was tired. And I thought I should like to tell you that even though our message is a thousand times rejected, it is the only message for—and in—the great realities. From that silent group I went to a little one-room shack, down the river, to tell a mother of seven that her children were fatherless. And there was no comfort to give—or take—for her soul knew not God. During that long, weary night, as I watched through the cracks the shining stars, and listened to stifled sobs and moans, I thought I should like to tell you that you must

never give up. It is worth more than it costs—the privilege of proclaiming the message of the Cross—"Believe Me," for without that message there is no hope.

Only a few days later a little child—all in flames—came running into my arms. As I kept watch with her through that night of agonizing pain "the Man of Sorrows" drew very near. He took her from a home of cursing, abuse and sin into radiant purity and love.

"Jesus loves me, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so."

And so we are triumphant! No sorrow can crush me, because once it crushed Him. Fearlessly we face death, because He took the sting away. The grave holds no terror. It only holds—for a while—the house we lived in. Hopefully we look beyond the tomb, for our gospel is a gospel of an empty grave.

"Believe Me!" I will believe Thee, my glorious Lord! In new dedication I give myself to Thee. Keep me steady and true in the manifold experiences of life. Keep the Cross ever before me. Help me remember that in saving others Thou couldst not save Thyself. So I—would I see others saved—can not save myself.

"With Thee, O Christ, I take my stand,
To go where Thou dost send,
A willing messenger for Thee,
If Thou Thy Spirit lend."

"Forward a Little — —"

"And He went forward a little, and fell on the ground and prayed—".—Mark 14:35.

JERUSALEM slumbers. One after another its lights go out. Silently the shining stars look down on a group of men passing through the city gate into the road leading to Olivet. They move slowly with bent heads, clinging together as though united by fear or unspeakable sorrow. I follow at a distance. The road is lined with vineyards, and beautiful vines climb over the walls and up the oleanders and the olive trees. I move nearer and hear One speak whose voice and words strangely grip me. "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit — —" And the voice goes on speaking, uninterrupted. It is tender and full of compassion as a mother's when quieting a troubled child; yet the words are strong and firm, charged with import and soul-gripping solemnity. He is giving them the chart for a safe voyage over a wild, unknown sea. He

tells them plainly of its perils and sufferings, and the meaning of it all, and of the Pilot He will give them. And when they realize the price I hear sobs and moans from the little group, and woe fills my own heart. And there is a sob even in His voice as I hear Him say, "I have yet many things to say, but you can not bear them now." And again He speaks of the Pilot, and my heart is strangely comforted, for I learn that the words which could not now be spoken will later be revealed.

Suddenly they stop by the roadside and He lifts up His face in prayer. As I listen to that prayer I know He is God, and that, whatever the consequences, I must follow Him.

I see them cross the brook Cedron and enter the garden. Here He tells them to sit down and wait while He calls to Peter, James and John to follow Him. His face expresses such sorrow and anguish that I turn my eyes away. And then He bids even the three tarry, watch and pray while He alone moves "forward a little", falling on His face—praying. Perplexed, awestruck, I again turn away. I have seen Him walk the sea, rebuke the wind, tell the dumb to speak, the deaf to hear, the blind to see, the lame to walk, and the dead to rise. I have heard Him declare Himself to be one with God; indeed, to be the Author of all things. In every circumstance He was the Master. And now—how can I understand

it—He is bowed down on the ground stricken with grief.

I turn to the three. They must understand. They have walked so intimately with Him. John even rested his head on the Master's bosom. John will surely understand. And He asked them to pray with Him! I feel it is in my heart to envy them. *He,* their Master, their wonderful Lord, needs their sympathy and their poor help! How exultant Peter must be! How He must rejoice that now he has a chance to prove the sincerity of his declaration, an hour ago, that he would die with Him. I know Peter must be saying, "John, James, I don't quite understand it. It is too deep for me. But it seems as though the sin and sorrow of all the world was upon Him, and He asked us to pray with Him. If our poor stammering prayers can be of any comfort to Him, let us not fail Him. He seems so lonely, let us stand by Him!" And I walk back and find them—asleep.

* * *

"Simon, sleepest thou? Couldst not thou watch one hour?" Through nineteen centuries the soul-piercing question comes down to me. I am Simon. Judas is even now bargaining to sell the Master for nineteen dollars and fifty cents. Some friends who yesterday cried "Hosanna" are to-day weaving a fresh crown of thorns for His brow. And His enemies are hewing the cross—while I sleep. I am Simon.

He is on trial today, in the world's supreme courts of learning, and all around the masses are crying, "Away with Him", while I am comfortably seated by the fires of His enemies. All around the dark night of sin has settled, and millions live without a ray of light or hope, while I—sleep.

My Watch

"I will stand upon my watch — — — to see what He will say unto me."—Hab. 2:1.

MASTER, early in the morning, before the multitudinous voices of the day disquiet, confuse and sidetrack me, "I will stand upon my watch to see what Thou wilt say unto me." How I need Thy quieting, reassuring, guiding voice! I have never walked the road that lies before me. I know nothing of its pitfalls, its unexpected turns, its shadows, its steep ascent or sudden decline. But Thou hast been there before me. Thou knowest every inch of the way. Thou knowest about the temptation that will take me unawares, the sharp word that will sting and wound me, the unfriendly glance that will unbalance me, the situation that will call forth and test all my patience, the crises that will demand all my powers of mind, heart and will; the emergency that will display the man I am, the sorrow that will stun and unnerve, the disappointment that will chill and discourage. Nothing is unknown to Thee. How then dare I face the day without first facing Thee? Thou art my Chart and my Compass. Thou art

my Light, my Strength, my Courage, my Nerve, my Patience, my Discernment. Thou art the Truth I seek, the Life I would live, the Way I must walk. How dare I walk into this new day without having consciously and definitely readjusted myself to Thee?

"I will stand upon my watch" at noon-tide—in the heat of the day. Above earth's clamoring voices, its din and bustle and confusion, above its cheering and its leering I will lift my head to see what Thou wilt say. So am I reminded whose I am. The tension of brain and nerve is lessened, the burden of my heart grows lighter, and my courage is renewed and my will energized

> "To bravely fight 'neath the Captain's eye,
> Ask no quarter, breathe no moan."

And to their disquieting, "They say", I can reply—undisturbed, "Let them say".

"I will stand upon my watch" when the shadows deepen and the day is done. Of all times I then need Thee most, for Thou art the door through which I enter into rest. In Thee alone my soul is homed. The day brought no other gain than that which stood the test of Thy appraisal, and no sorrow or loss was truly mine if not recognized by Thee.

> "The long bazaar may praise,
> But Thou, Soul of my soul,
> What sayest Thou?"

So through the lifelong day I will keep my watch, not because of an iron rule I must follow to gain an end, but because of a law of love that has become a part of my inmost being. I am free in Thee—free as the bird on the wing is free, in its own sphere—and that sphere is as limitless as Thy love. Nevertheless Thou art my limitation as well as my freedom. In Thee there dwelleth nothing impure. To find it I must turn from Thee. In Thee there is no unrest. To lose my poise I must part company with Thee. In Thee there can be no love for gold, no passion for fame, no impure motive, no compromise with truth, no self-seeking ambition. And so I say, Thou art my limitation, for would I have any of these things that destroy my peace and cause heart-aches and defeat, I must have them apart from Thee.

And so I must keep my watch. I must take my friend from Thee, if that friend is not going to become a detriment to my character and growth. I must take my pleasures from Thy hand, if they are not going to turn into griefs. The book I read must have Thy approval, if it is not to damage my soul.

And finally, when earth's lights grow dim in the splendor of that greater light, how "I will stand on my watch to see what Thou wilt say unto me"! Then nothing else matters. Wilt Thou say, "Well done"?

Our Work—What Is It?

HOW eager we are *to do!* And so often our wanting to do is an admission, conscious or unconscious, that we have failed *to be.* We pity the Hindu in his lifelong, weary journey from shrine to shrine, but what would we not be willing to do, if by doing it we could look God in the face unashamed!

The one thing that more than any other keeps men from the Cross is the fact that the Cross stands for man's complete failure both to be and to do. "Just as I am, without one plea," is not the natural tendency of the human heart. "A golden deed" a day, or salvation on the installment plan, appeals more.

God's great command it not *do* but *be! "Be ye holy"* rings through the Old Testament. And the whole Old Testament story bears out the evidence that man was not holy.

Therefore the Cross.

"My God is reconciled, I can no longer fear
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And Father, Abba Father cry."

But "being justified freely," what is my work? What must I do? Again, God's command is not *do* but *be*. "Be ye filled with the Spirit" is an all-inclusive New Testament command. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." And—do I dare to write it—it seems such a daring thought: To have the Spirit of God is to have the character of God. "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." "The glory of God" is His character. "But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory (character) of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory (character) to glory (character) even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

What then is the purpose of our being? "That we should be to the praise of His glory (character)". The great compensation that comes to God now and in the eternal ages is the reflex glory of His own character in His children.

And still we press the question, What is my work? What is my pathway of service? "If a man therefore purge himself from these (by allowing the workings of the Spirit through surrender and obedience) he shall *be* a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." So in the last analysis our work is *to*

be. The full realization of that fact brings rest and quietness.

Soul, all tired out by much doing and striving, and accomplishments of small effect, will you not listen and make this thought yours: "The worker is more than the work." God wants *you!* He is eagerly looking into your face for the reflection of His own character. The work He gave you is yours only in the sense that it is used by Him as a means of changing you into His likeness. In other respects the work is His. You are an instrument in His hands.

Why so troubled about your weakness? Does not the Master know how to use His tools? Why so disappointed in environments and people? Does He not know how best to bring out His likeness in you? Why so discouraged over the long delay that seems like a waste of precious time? Would you tell Him that the time is up? Cut off by sickness? Put on the shelf? Never! God is making characters, not tin-soldiers. Whatever your peculiar condition just now, God's eye is watching you. He is eagerly looking for His own likeness.

"Have Thine own way, Lord,
Have Thine own way.
Thou art the Potter, I am the clay.
Make me and mold me, after Thy will,
While I am waiting, yielded and still."

This I Know

"MUST this go on forever?" asks a friend, in a personal letter, in which he describes a life of distressing failure, defeat and disloyalty to Christ. "It can't be. There must be a way out, but I don't know what to do. Tell me the 'how' of victory." Another writes, "I do not seem to realize that I am yielding to temptation, but very suddenly I realize that I have already yielded." Still another says, "I know that life without Christ is meaningless, but He is so unreal to me, and I have no appetite for the Bible."

Dear friends, I trust you will pardon me for answering your letters in this general way, for your problems are not peculiarly yours; all who truly love the Lord will recognize them as their own. You wrote to me, did you not, because you wanted someone to point you to a way and say, "I know it works: I have tried it. It is experimentally true."

If my own experience were the touch-stone of victory, surely there would be no hope, but, praise God, it is found in His sure Word. Few Christians have known more of disloyalty and defeat than I,

but through long weary years the one thing that kept me from utter despondency was the teaching of His Word. I would say to myself, "There is, indeed, a life of victory, in spite of your experience, for does He not say, 'Sin *shall not* have dominion over you'? Then, though your sin should lead you to hell, and though you should never meet one who knew experimentally the overcoming, abundant life, you should still know that such a life existed, for God cannot lie."

But God did send in my way, to condemn as well as to inspire, men who were habitual "overcomers" and whose lives were like refreshing, purifying streams. You have met such men, and you say you long to be like them. You long for the power that is theirs, for their poise and peace, and the influence that lifts everything it touches. I, too, long for those things. And God longs for you and me to have them. Why, then, do we know more of defeat than victory?

All that I know of the "why" of defeat and the "how" of victory is summed up in three little words, in the sixth chapter of Romans. The first word is "*Know*". I must know that I am "in Christ", a Christian. A Christian is one who "confesses with his mouth the Lord Jesus, and believes in his heart that God raised Him from the dead" (Rom. 10:9). Your uncertainty, my friend, your aloofness from Christ, and your lack of spiritual enjoyment may be

due to the fact that you have not confessed Christ. Say nothing that is not real to you, but say all that is real, and you will find the realities grow. Then I must know that "in Christ" I died and was buried and in Him I rose—a "new man" to a "newness of life" in which sin and death have no reigning power. The second word is *"Reckon"*. It simply means (so I have found it) the acceptance of the things I know, the putting into practice the thing I learned. It is the drawing of the check endorsed by God. It is "counting God true". I am dead to sin. I am alive to God only. When I am not realizing that I am yielding to sin. Does that not mean that I, at that particular moment, am not alive to God? And the third word grows out of the second, as the second grows out of the first: *"Yield"*. It is the keyword to victory. It is the crowning word and the testing word. Whatever the circumstances of my fall, whatever its nature, the cause was always my yielding to the wrong power.

Still I hear your sad, persistent question "how?" And I have another word for you. It is my own interpretation of the word "yield". To me the word "yield" expresses the most positive action I know anything about. It calls into alertness every power, every faculty, every member of my being. It can never be passive. It can never "let down". It never rests on the job. A "victorious life" is made up of momentary victories. And my momentary victory

is the result of my momentary recognition of the Lordship of Christ. That is slavery, you say. Yes, Paul called himself the "bondslave of Jesus Christ." And if that word offends, you do well to remember that each moment you are not under the blessed slavery of the One who died for you, you are a slave under the one whose aim is your eternal death. There is no middle road.

So I have found that my path to victory lies in aggression rather than in defense. When my mind is pre-occupied with plans for the kingdom of God it is well fortified against the attacks of the tempter.

Above all, dear friends, remember that God is God and His power is as great as His love, and that power, as much of it as you can use, is yours for the taking.

My Foundation and My Building

"Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble."—I Cor. 3:12.

I THINK I have feared a wrong foundation as much as I have feared anything in life. It was primarily this fear that led me to question and doubt everything. For already as a child I had witnessed old people die, who did not want to die; who feared death with a terrible fear. And the reason, I found, was that they had made a failure of life—and knew it. I did not want a repetition of that. I did not want to stand on the brink of eternity and see my whole house crumble to dust, because its foundation was "sinking sand". Long did I search, and far did I wander before I found that "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," and so I found Thee again, Master of mine. And the strongest thing in my soul is the consciousness that I am on the foundation that neither the wild roaring sea nor the floods of hell can engulf or shake.

In that consciousness there is a peace; "peace like a river," deep, strong, reverberating through all my being. In that consciousness there is love; love that makes the heart ache for all aimless, deceived, blind builders, who waste their time erecting costly superstructures on hopeless foundations. Some day the whole splendid building must fall.

In the meditation on that thought I am reminded that my own building may crumble in spite of the fact that its foundation is eternal. Thy Word tells me that it is possible to build, on the Good Foundation, a house that will not stand the test of fire: wood, hay, stubble; or a house whose solidity fire will reveal: gold, silver, precious stones. And so I know that I may stand before Thy face, in that great and awful day, as a newborn babe, my whole life wiped out, as though I had never known the Foundation. The last one born into the Kingdom will have more than I, for he will have Eternal Life, minus my shame.

And I remember that every part of my house will be tested with the fire of God's Truth. Be the superstructure molded ever so gloriously, in purest gold, it will be wrecked when that strata of rubbish, way back in my youth, when I had barely commenced the building, is dealt with, by God's fire. Important as the foundation is, it will save nothing that fire can destroy.

So I ask Thee, dear Master, let the search-light from Thy face fall on my building today; lay bare its every weakness, reveal its every fault. Touch it with a live coal from off Thy altar, that it may stand secure and unhurt, honoring Thee, in the day that will show forth gain or irreparable loss.

A Comparison and Contrast

"Blessed (happy) are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."—Matt. 5:6.

PUT alongside the text another statement by Jesus, from the fourth chapter of John, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again." "This water"—all the water of the world. Let us see! Is there not satisfaction in fame? Would I not be triumphantly happy if whither I went I should be recognized and hailed as one of the great? There is one, in our day, who over night leaped to world-fame. His name is known as far as civilization has reached her little finger. A rumor of his presence will magically bring a crowd, in desert and city alike. What does he say? Wearily and frowningly he looks out over the cheering, pressing throng and says, "Why can't they leave me alone?"—"He shall thirst again". And Byron, the great poet, who had all the intellectuality of Europe at his feet, when he reached his thirty-third birthday wrote,

"In this world so dim and dreary,
I have lived till three and thirty;
What have these years brought to me?
Nothing—except thirty-three."

"He shall thirst again."

But suppose I won the world? Well, there is the old story of Alexander the Great who thought he had conquered the world and shed tears because he had no other worlds to conquer.—"He shall thirst again."

But love will do it! So it seems. Still, one who knew said,

"The love I leaned on failed and pierced my heart,
The hands I clung to loosed themselves from mine."

"He shall thirst again."

So then in all the wide world there is nothing to satisfy the hunger and thirst of the soul! Ah, the Master knew! Had He not made the world? Did He not know its limitations? Had He not made the soul and breathed into it a longing that He alone could fill?

* * *

"Happy are they which do hunger and thirst" — —So, then, there is a hunger and thirst that makes happy now! Thou didst not, my Lord, say, "Blessed shall they be"—but, "Blessed *are* they," and truth alone proceeded from the lips of *Truth*.

Therefore, if I am not now serenely happy, if the peace "that passeth all understanding" (and misunderstanding) is not mine, it is an indication that my ambition, my hunger and thirst have another object than Thyself. For herein is the secret of the "blessed thirst"—it is a thirst after Thee. Thou art the Fountain of Righteousness, that alone can satisfy my heart. The hunger and thirst after Thee is happy, because it is definite. I *know* what I want. I am saved from the unrest that drives the soul from mirage to mirage only to result in despair.

And the hunger and thirst after Thee is happy, because it can ever be filled. The farmer behind his plow; the king upon his throne; the mother over the washtub; the lonely missionary, in his mud hut; the great intellect, in his study; the eloquent teacher, in his pulpit; the "roughneck" and the highbrow, the poorest and the richest alike have the same access to the wondrous Fountain. My thirst alone determines the inflow. I may have a satisfaction that fills my morning hours with gladness, or a satisfaction that makes my whole life an ever-widening and deepening river of irresistible power and usefulness. "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him *shall never* thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

And this blessed thirst puts purpose and steadfastness into my life. It is a thirst for all the world

to know Thee. It ever must seek out to the limitless, the eternal things. It rightly estimates the value of the transient. It will never allow me to shift my devotion and loyalty for Thee over to an organization that bears Thy name. It will prevent me from making the fatal mistake of thinking of souls in terms of money. It cost Thy life to make Thy righteousness mine. Is my thirst after Righteousness —Thyself—only great enough, it may cost my life to bring Thee to others.

Some one has said that the man has not yet been born who can feed us forever. No, not a mere man, but no one has ever been "fed up" on Thee. Unfathomable are the depths of Thy wisdom and knowledge, unsearchable the riches of Thy grace. Were I to go on through countless ages growing—growing—growing, ever wouldst Thou remain my matchless Teacher, my limitless Master. Ah, blessed, blessed is the thirst after Thee! Make me want Thee more, that Thy fulness may fill up my emptiness. I love Thee, Lord!

Hidden Springs

"He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water".—Psa. 1:5.

HALF way up the barren mountainside, cool and serene in torpid desert-heat, stands an old live Oak, the only green, living thing against a background of sunbaked rocks. Birds nest in its leafy branches, and the quail calls to its mate from its green shadows. Neither the East wind nor a hundred summers' sun can dry up its moisture. You see, its roots reach down to a hidden spring.

I remember visiting, a few years ago, an old homestead up North. In a sunny, clean attic-room there was a little white haired, smiling woman who for twenty years had not been able to move hand or foot. Her face, as white as her pillow, was the only "living" part of her body. It was stamped with serene happiness, calm sweetness. With greatest tenderness and devotion her sturdy husband looked down upon her—"We couldn't get along without her. She is our blessing."

"Yes," said the little woman, "and a great blessing, surely! He has fed me and clothed me and nursed me as a little baby these many years." And when she noticed the quick tears in our eyes she said, "Don't think it is always contentment and peace. I am no saint. When the children were small, got hurt and needed help and I could not move a finger, I rebelled. Only little by little did I learn that His grace *is* sufficient. But that is a very deep lesson and I have been such a dull learner." Again her face was lit up with a smile full of wisdom and tenderness. She, too, had found the Hidden Spring.

Once I saw a soul bowed down to earth in such grief as my heart could not fathom. Speechless, comfortless, groaning in my spirit, involuntarily clinching my fingers in rebellion, I looked on—and waited. Finally the bowed head was lifted and on the tearstained face I saw a light not found on sea or earth or sky. In the words of the grief-stricken hero of old she said, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." And I knew her heart had found the secret Spring.

One day sorrow met me and said we had a long steep trail to walk together. And when we had walked—what seemed to me a very long way—Sorrow said it was but the beginning. My heart grew faint and my soul was weary unto death. The face of God was hidden, and no one seemed to understand—or care. Then one crossed my path who looked into

my eyes and knew. His strong hand held mine for a moment as he said "Don't faint, dear heart! God is very near. He rides the dark clouds in order to reveal Himself to you in deeper ways. You cannot bear your burden. It is too great. I could not bear it for you, but God is even now holding both you and your burden in His everlasting arms. Do not wait for the feeling. Rest in the fact! And the trail is not so very long. Last night I saw the fair red lights of *Home.*"

He walked on—on his way—and, strengthened, with new courage and hope, I, too, walked on, refreshed by the touch of one whose life was made strong from the secret Spring.

In "the maddening maze of things" men are losing their foothold, their sense of value and proportion. They are gambling their souls for recognition. They are sacrificing Truth for popularity. They are juggling with ethics and religion to hide their shame. They are compromising with their own conscience for money, passion, lust. They are turning their backs on Canaan and Canaan's God for the flesh-pots of Egypt. They have turned God's garden into a barren, sunbaked desert. But in the midst of all that thorny, barren unloveliness, in that torpid heat, in that withering wind, stands the man of God as the green sturdy oak up yonder. Their biting sarcasm, their poisoned hatred and envy can not harm him any more than a shower of pebbles harms the

oak. Their money can not buy him, their flattery not warp him, their disapproval not wither him. His peace is like the river, the river that feeds from the hidden spring and flows on majestically, calmly—to the ocean. He has a message? Surely! And men listen with fear in spite of sneering lips. But his message is not, after all, most important. The man himself, the indisputable fact of him, is the miracle. He bears witness of the hidden Spring.

Please, God! Make my heart to know the hidden Spring! I want to be like the oak up yonder.

The Set Face

"He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem."—Luke 9:51.

DO you hold religion, or does religion hold you? Is your service for God a pleasant pastime, a mere incident in your life, or is it the sum and substance of your ambition? Is your belief a comfortable and respectable Sunday-coat, or is it an all-dominating conviction that decides your every action and controls your life? Are you thoughtlessly running on in habitual ruts, or are you ever on the alert, ever sensitive to the gentle leadings of the indwelling Spirit of God? Do you know anything about "the set face", the unswerving purpose, the uncompromising life? Or are you ever satisfied with surface religion, a shouting, noisy, self-satisfied "holiness", a goody-goody "meekness", a spineless "tolerance"?

Did you say you are a preacher, and so it does not apply to you? Do you know that the preacher's "professional airs", his "ecclesiastical phraseology", his "tone" are greater hindrances to God today than his prayerlessness and superficial Bible study?

You are a missionary? Crossing the sea, living in a hut, denying your body and soul comforts and fellowship do not make you a saint. The thoughts of your heart against your fellow-missionary, your uncharitableness and your self-indulgence blight your usefulness and blessing more than you dream. Of course, you are lonely and misunderstood! We all are. But we are talking now about a sure cure, a purpose reaching down so deep into our beings that it makes us "overcomers", characters that nothing can warp.

A Sunday school teacher, you said? In the Primary department because it requires so little preparation? And in secular educational circles today authorities agree that only the best, most thoroughly trained teacher is competent for the lower grades. Your sin is not your lack of training but your attitude in serving God.

A leader in the young people's society? And when the woods and hillsides and waterfronts and parks hold a greater attraction to the members in your society than the Sunday afternoon meeting, you feel somewhat like a martyr; and facing the empty, dusty chairs in the shut-in-ness of the basement, with its stale air and faded decorations, you promise yourself a "Sunday off"?

Only a member, with no particular duty to perform? A listener? For you your pastor labors and prays and pours the very blood and tears of his own

heart into his message. For you the choir sings, the song leader selects the hymns, the organist plays. For you the church is built. And when the God-given, prayer-steeped message is brought, and the speaker eagerly looks into your face for response, you yawn, or perhaps whisper a remark to your neighbor about somebody's new hat, or you pass a non-essential note to a chum.

"He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem."

Friend, I am going up to look at that "set face". Will you come with me?

Rejected by His own people, plotted against by its leaders, grossly misunderstood by His own disciples, seeing before Him the agony of Gethsemane, the heartrending betrayal, the desertion of friends, the shame and pain of Calvary, the overshadowing darkness of the Cross, "He steadfastly set His face."

Master, what made you do it? I am facing some obstacles in myself: physical and mental limitations, a desire to follow the line of least resistance, and my determination is slackened. I have to live and work with disagreeable people, and my love is waning—I am always hurt. When I do my best, I meet with criticism, and I am ready to throw everything over board. I so fear ridicule and contradiction that I hold my peace when things sacred are assailed. I am necessarily out of touch with church-fellowship, for a while, and I get "dry" and "mouldy" spiritually.

How dare I pull these little grievances alongside Thy supreme "test"? There is no comparison, Master, but only before "the set face" can I get my sense for proportions adjusted. And so I come, bringing with me all that constitutes my life: its sin and failure, its cowardice and fear, its weakness and limitation, its vainglory and lack of love; come to learn the secret of "the set face", the uncompromising life, the loyalty that never swerves, the purpose that is never diverted, the love that loves to the end.

One of our own dear missionaries exclaims in a letter: "Oh, God, for a life that makes others hunger for Thee." This is the result of "the set face" life.

Please, God, make it mine, somehow!

The Point of View

"While we look not at the things which are seen." II Cor. 4:18.

"WHILE we look not at the things which are seen," or while we are not guided by them, so that our lives are focused to their limited range, for they shall all perish, and our life-work, if gauged by them, shall perish, too.

We are told to seek a point of view above all controversy and all change; a point of view unlimited by time, space and human relationships; a point of view that is eternal. Hungrily I look at the lives of men and women who openly declare that their citizenship is in heaven.

I heard a mother pray in great earnest that workers be thrust out into the ripening harvest. And because she has a son out there, and a daughter who had volunteered, her prayer thrilled me as the sweeping grandeur of a soul living above the mist, looking at life from the point of view of the Eternal. I sought her out and heard her say, "No, she is not going if I can help it. One is enough."—Enough for what, little mother?

He was a Student Volunteer. I heard him speak in glowing words of his "call", and I thanked God for a soul reaching out for the limitless. But soon he met an earthly love that eclipsed the eternal. She, was too frail for the hardships of a tropical climate. They settled down comfortably in a newly built parsonage, mildly interested in missions, absorbingly interested in "the things which are seen." They are rather strong on doctrines too, and very "fundamental".

Years ago I saw one who gave all the appearance of a chosen vessel. He had been "in the spirit" on the isle of vision and seen "the land of far distances". His words were ever pure, unmixed with the accents of "Main Street". Unerringly he drew the line between eternal and temporal values. Fearlessly he bared the putrid sores of sin. I met him again. He was blind and did not know it. In his own eyes alone he was great, and men refused to be guided by him. What had happened? Oh, he just wanted something so much that he took it, regardless of God.

She was a consecrated worker in the church. One of the quiet, unselfish souls that move mountains without noise. And now? Why, all she talks and thinks and dreams of is to make the next payment on some investment that will insure her comfort in "old age". And the age-less ages beyond are forgotten.

He was a successful pastor, but one day his church called an evangelist for special meetings, and the pastor failed to co-operate. Where once there was vision and power there is now narrow-minded fault-finding and stagnation.

He was greatly used and greatly beloved, but one day a brother wronged him, and he went back on his "call", forgot his "mission" and lost their love, because he stubbornly demanded vindication by men. What if the Master had turned back when Peter denied Him! Why did He not?

They had a farewell for her, and everybody praised her as a leader. It was said that their loss would be the gain of the local church in that other place. But it was not. For the church in that place was too small and insignificant for her "talents". They would be better appreciated in the big Tabernacle. And it was far to go, too. Far? Oh, well, that depends on the point of view. It was far from adoring angels to the scoffing and spitting of Calvary. But it wasn't too far for Him. And it is far from the Valley of the Shadows to the glassy sea and the golden streets. Will it be too far for some of us, I wonder?

He had high ideals about a pastor's calling: To dig ever deeper into the unsearchable riches of the Word and bring out gems of truth to convict, cheer and lift. But his congregation seemed to feel that

their duty was to help him spend his time with coffee and gossip. He did not squarely face the issue and decide what was essential but gradually the ideal was lowered and he became another restless, shallow copyist who did his thinking and praying and studying in little snatches between the coffees, and mostly to the accompaniment of gossip. That "the furnishing of God's man" required the best part of the day was lost sight of for—"things which are seen". And when he enters his pulpit he barely knows his text, and when he leaves it there may be a flutter of emotion in the minds of his audience, but no one walks out with a new purpose and a new conviction.

"That sermon only cost me half an hour's preparation," a stupid preacher said to a farmer. And he replied, "I thought so as I listened to it."

She knew from experience that the fiction of the day beclouded her vision and interrupted her communion with the Master, but she persisted until her peace was gone and the Bible became a closed book.

She knew that he only wanted her body and that his soul was incapable of love, but for a moment of pleasure she bought an eternity of grief.

Yes. I knew what he did was good and worth while from a human point of view, but in the light of eternity it fades clear out of view.

In one of the deserts of the West I met a traveler from my own country. He did not know Christ, but his soul was aflame with a great conviction: that through education the downtrodden proletariat would rise to mastery. His conviction consumed him as a flame consumes the oil. Every desire that did not serve his conviction was suppressed. He had no salary. No organization backed him up. He went from place to place working with his hands, and in the evenings gathered reluctant, weary laborers around his "gospel" of liberty.

In numerous Christian schools I see numerous young men who claim to be followers of Him whose one purpose was the salvation of souls at any cost —the greatest cost. I see them dabble in theology, science and philosophy, getting a veneer of "learning" that deceives no one but themselves. And they are waiting for a "call"—from some church, district or denomination—a call that can give them prestige and tomorrow's bread. As a rule they get what they are looking for—most people do—but often they spend their days nursing their own griefs and troubling denominational leaders. To slave for the Master, tramp the thorny paths of self-denial to seek a lost sheep, to spend their powers without reward and recognition of men, only spurred by their love and the hope of His "well done" is beyond the scope of their vision.

Still, here He stands, calling, calling, calling—"Follow me—he that loveth his life shall lose it. He that loses it—for my sake—shall find it." We have got to make the choice—and *stick* to it. Which shall it be—material or spiritual?

Messages

Christ-Possessed

(A quiet talk, requested by the Graduating Class of the Swedish Free Church Bible Institute in 1922, during a left-over period after examination.)

"THE way to Christ," someone has said, "often leads through some Christian character that is closer to us in time and environment." — — But Christ-possessed and Christ-radiating men are very rare. And this is the very heart of our problem. Were we Christ-filled personalities we should attract men to Christ as the magnet attracts the steel. I cannot but wonder what would happen if we—a dozen or more of us—would go out into life, completely mastered by Christ: our thoughts, emotions, wills so symphonized by His life that God would dare entrust to us His power!

The much repeated conversation between Moody and Varley ever holds for me the same soul-stirring appeal. You recall how Moody asked, "Did it ever occur to you that God is eagerly looking for a man to whom He dare entrust more power than He ever entrusted to anyone?" — — And Varley is thinking

that Moody is that man, but he dare not say it, for the voice of Moody is husky with tears, as though he realized that with him God had reached His limit.

How far can He go with you and me? Has he perhaps already reached His limit in some of us? It does not necessarily mean that we will not develop and grow and be successful and recognized, yes, even exert a far-reaching influence. It only means that when God would have sent through us a river of power that would have lifted thousands, we only gave Him a chance to send a little trickling streamlet—only enough to refresh and bless one here and there.

Let us remember this when we are praised by men, when they recognize what we did—our speaking, writing, singing. And when through our labors men are brought to the Cross, let us look up to Him and say, "Father, this Thou hast done in spite of me, what wouldst Thou not have done, if I had not hindered Thee!"

Why are these Christ-possessed men so rare? Why can't you and I belong to them—be personalities through whom God can release His power?

It is a solemn beginning for a talk, is this question, but I put it first, because our attitude toward it will determine our attitude toward every other question we will discuss. And not that only: it will also determine our relationship to God, ourselves, life and our fellow men.

I meant to speak to you about ourselves and others, but as long as our relationship to God lies at the bottom, we must start there, in order to get a standard for our valuation and an ideal to pursue.

Is it not true of us, here today, that we are standing as it were on the threshold of a larger life, and all of us possessed of a deep yearning to become what God meant us to be? Without exception we would say with A. B. Simpson,

> "Give me, O Lord, Thy highest choice,
> Let others take the rest.
> Their good things have no charm for me,
> For I have got Thy best."

No question could for us have a greater practical value than this, "How can I attain to God's best?" I am not here to answer that question for you, for I know full well that only God can give that answer to the soul that dares to be alone with Him. I will merely suggest to you a line of thought I believe would be helpful, if you would take it up and in the quietness of your own room follow it out. If it is a truth you have already recognized, it will grow on you, and you will grow in it, by living it out.

Why do Christians backslide, live on a lower plane, miss "God's best?" I have observed others, and I know by experience one common cause. We failed to realize that the dedication of our lives was

but the first step in the Christ-possessed life. After that should have followed an endless succession of yielding, moment by moment, with our will constantly "tuned in" to His. It is through our will God molds our character. The impulse comes through the heart, but through the will the character is made.

As I look into your faces I know what is in your hearts, at this hour. You are filled with holy emotions. Should I ask you if you wanted God's own plan for your life, I know what answer I would get. And still, dear friends, that is no guarantee that your character is open to the molding hand of God. It is in the routine of every-day life that the molding takes place. Each choice I make has its molding effect. Shall I bring an illustration from your own life?

You left the meeting with such exalted feelings that heaven seemed very near and Christ so very real. You met a friend. Incidentally he told of the sad condition in a certain church, or family, or of some individual. Soon mistake after mistake, fault after fault is discussed, and before you realize it you have been lending ear and tongue to gossip. Did you want to? Oh no! not consciously, but before the thought could become a word it must have the consent of your will. What is the result? Not only are you pulled down from your mountain-peak experience, but the habit to weakly consent has been strengthened, the power to discern weakened, and the love that sym-

pathizes and forgives has been suppressed. Your character is being molded. But by whom?

Or take another familiar illustration. You are walking down the street, your mind at rest—wandering aimlessly. A sensational placard, by the wayside, attracts your eye for a moment. There is something suggestive of all that is sensual and low in that picture. You turn away. But because your mind was off its guard an impression was made, and you find your thoughts—like birds of prey—flocking around the thing you despise. Your habit of thought is being molded. How? (Let me say here, within parenthesis, that temptation is not sin, unless it be accompanied by the consent of your will. "There may seem to be even the inclination, and yet the real choice of your spirit is fixed immovably against it, and God regards it simply as a solicitation and credits you with an obedience all the more pleasing to Him, because the temptation was so strong.")

"We little know how evil can find access to a pure nature and seem to incorporate itself with our thoughts and feelings, while at the same time we resist and overcome it, and remain as pure as the seafowl that emerges from the water without a single drop remaining upon its burnished wing, or as the harp string, which may be struck by a rude or clumsy hand and gives forth a discordant sound, not from any defect of the harp, but because of the hand that

touches it. But let the Master hand play upon it, and it is a chord of melody and a note of exquisite delight." (Simpson.)

I can not help temptation, but I can, in the name of Christ, and in His power say *no*. And each time I thus yield to Christ my power to consciously choose will be strengthened. Let us not fool ourselves and others, who may come to us for help, by saying that to the heart possessed by Christ, temptation has no appeal. It is true that I may be so conscious of Christ, that temptation has no power over me. But no one—so far as my observation goes—constantly lived on such a mountain-peak of Christian experience. And just below that mountain many have fallen.

Very close then—as we have seen—our relationship to God is connected with our relationship to ourselves. And the connection is still unbroken, as we go on to a third relationship: that of ourselves to others. The supreme test of all our work is not, "What have you accomplished?" but, "What have you become?"

How differently would we not many times have acted, had we—in our preparation of a task—considered that God had given it to us for our development! We would not have preached so much to others, but because we strove to meet the need in our own heart, we would have met the need in other hearts, and when we spoke the truth to ourselves we would to other souls have revealed their frailties and faults.

This, I believe, is another characteristic of a Christ-man: he ever looks for God's message to himself in whatever life brings him. And so he lives in real earnest. He scorns sham and show, and he never sacrifices truth for a shallow victory.

And he is humble. We know it from his serenity and poise. Nothing ruffles him. It never annoys him when others are preferred before him, for he knows that he is nothing in himself. What "they say" never disturbs his sleep. He is invincible to the poisoned arrow of slander. The Supreme Judge is his Father, who can pardon because He took the penalty upon Himself. If he is a missionary, he will not send in a letter of protest or hand in his resignation, because he has been put under one who is younger in years, or has a training inferior to his own. Is he a minister, he will not for ever ask himself, "What do they say about me, my preaching, my life? What influence do I exert?" And if the neighborhood preacher draws a bigger crowd, and has more publicity and recognition, the humble man will thank God that some one is found usable. Humility stands at the zero mark. It has nothing to lose, for it has already lost all—to God. Its only boast is God. The humble preacher is a man among men. He does not carry his ordination as a pharisaic text on his forehead, or his missionary calling as a halo. If he makes a mistake, he admits it, and does not attempt to cover it up. He does not criticise a brother preacher, for

he is conscious of his own shortcomings. He is honest. Pride does not prevent him from seeing the truth, nor fear of men from saying it. He that fears God with all his heart need not fear man.

What is the real object of our living, in the world, as Christian men and women? Simply to represent Christ. We are here to live the Christ-life. I rejoice in the theoretical training you have received here. I know it will be a help to you. It will keep your mind steady, on the heaving sea of human speculation. It will keep you from becoming confused over so-called "new" interpretations of the Bible. But I know something vastly more important than "soundness," "orthodoxy" and "fundamentalism": *a living contact with Christ.* It will do away with schisms, because it can put no emphasis on "isms". He that leans so close to the Master that he can put a listening ear to the throbbing heartbeats of *love,* will have but one aim, one consuming passion—world-ward—"that ye may believe". Oh, I plead with you, let your preaching be—*Christ!* Leave all the other issues—important though they may seem to be—to others. Be thou a Christ-man! They are so rare, so hard to find; be thou one! I wish I could take all the things you remember me by, all the words that may have influenced and helped you, and melt them into one short sentence: Let Christ master your life! It is my heart's prayer for you. Should I hear—in years to come—that you are successful, that men

flock to hear you, it would make me happy; but eagerly would I listen through their praises for a testimony that your lives speak louder than your words of the Master you serve. And nothing could make me happier than that.

I want to confide in you, tell you something I have never before told any one. It is ever with an inner trembling I meet a former student. It will be the same with you. And I do not wonder should you feel the same way about me. We have aspired high, and we have resolved high. We have no idea where that aspiration and high resolve will lead us, nor how much it may cost. Some of us will turn back. It may be I. Will you remind me then? I wish you would!

The infinitely great is the infinitely simple. The problems of time and all eternity are reduced to one: my relationship to Him. Goethe tells us that the secret of mastery is elimination. Paul says, "One thing I do." God is now looking for men and women who are willing to be and do—*one thing.*

We started out by asking God for His best. His best is Christ. God is today giving Christ to the world—through us. How does He look, seen through our lives?

Master! We thank Thee for the solemnity of this hour. It has stirred us deeply. We want Thee, and Thee only. Rather would each of us be a flaming

fire for Thee than have all the glories of the world at our command.

Hear our prayer! Let us not miss God's plan whatever else we miss. Bless the world through us. Make of our lives a torch whereby others may see Thy face. We love Thee. May others love Thee because of us! Amen.

(Rewritten from memory and notes.)

A Great Life

Character-study of John the Baptist

WHEN I today speak of greatness I am not using the measurements of time or man. I am using the measurements of the One who "measured the waters (the Atlantic and the Pacific, the Arctic and the Antartic, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea) in the hollow of His hand, and meted out the heavens (the universe so endless that astronomers tell us it takes millions of years for the light of some distant star to reach our planet) with a span (the length between the fingers) and comprehended the dust of the earth (all of our great continents) in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance." I am putting up for our consideration the man by Christ declared to be the greatest born by woman. In studying the characteristics of this man, we shall learn something of what God considers great.

Let us begin in John 1. The first we learn is his *source.* "There was a man sent from God." The source of a great life is God. There must be a beginning. That beginning must be God.

How does it manifest itself—this great life? In humility. He disclaims any personality for himself. Not many of his kind today! How eager we are to be appreciated at our value! I am—so and so. Yes, I took my degree. Please notice the letters after my name! And don't forget when I dedicated my life to the Lord I gave up a career! Here is a man whom Christ calls the greatest. What has he to say of himself? "I am not." That is all. And when they still pressed him, "I am the voice — —." Who remembers a voice? You think of the words, you think of the one who speaks, but the voice is forgotten. So he disclaims personality. Still, what a striking personality he is! And recognized!

What is humility? Who can say! But we always recognize it when we meet it. Mark! John did not say, "I am nobody. I have no talent. I can't do things—like others." That is not humility but its counterfeit.

And he is fearless. A rare thing, in our days, a fearless preacher! Still, some of us are rather fearless in the pulpit sometimes. But we dare not follow John in his private, everyday fearlessness that cost him his life. Why, to us it might mean a friendship, or popularity among associates! Great things—those —down here! Better go softly! One may have zeal without knowledge. True! But if we turn it around we come closer home. Most of us have more knowledge than zeal.

And he had a message. "Some come that are not sent. Others are sent that never come. And some come—without a message." Like children sent on an errand, they were attracted by a game on the roadside—and they forgot! But God's man is sent; he comes, and he has a message.

What are the requirements of this great life? An all-dominating conviction, first of all. His disciples were troubled. "How is this, John? You remember that one you baptized? Well, He is drawing the crowd." But not so John. Untroubled, unmoved, he reveals to them God's plan. Behind every great conviction there is a great vision. Open our eyes, God!

Another requirement is earnestness. "A burning and shining light." Repetition? Oh, no! You may burn without shining. I have a lamp, and when it is lit, all it is good for is to announce its own existence. I have another lamp. It helps me do something beside dreaming, in the evening. It shines. Earnestness is another quality demanding a high price. It means being satisfied with nothing less than reality and truth. It means to be aggressive against darkness.

And he was obedient. Never a compromise. Far too little do we emphasize the importance of obedience. Not only do our peace and joy depend on it, but also our spiritual vision and growth. Often

young people will ask me if I believe this or that to be sin. There is but one answer. What does your Master say? You are uncertain? Remember then Paul's definition of sin: "All that is not of faith is sin." Faith is certainty, a glad trust, an unruffled peace. If you do not have these, are you not approaching dangerous ground? But don't talk to man about your reasons and excuses: look into the loving face of your Master, with the marks of Gethsemane, Calvary and Olivet on His brow, and tell Him that you feel He is asking you too much. It is truly a matter between you and Him.

In the life that God calls great, there is a *must*. "He must increase, I must decrease."

And what is the purpose of this great life? "To bear witness of the light." To be an index finger, pointing to "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." If there is no pointing to Christ in your life and mine, we are not fulfilling God's purpose for us.

There is a touching epitaph, inscribed by men over the life of John, in John 10:41, "And many resorted to Him and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true." A great life is an undeniable *fact* about Christ. It is a mirror—reflecting Him.

And what about it, young friend, if you are but a broken little bit of a prism! Through you a ray of light may be refracted and show forth its radiance'

"Not much of a speaker, was he?"—"No, but did you notice how big his Christ was?" A poor valueless lens—as the world's valuation goes—but somehow his focus was always right. He never blurred the Master's face. And into the record he goes—as God's man. And some day he will be associating with that eagle-eyed and lion-hearted man who was great in the sight of God.

Stories

A Present Day Miracle

WE met on a steamer coming down the Pacific Coast. He was a man of perhaps forty. His face was white and drawn. Grief and pain had lined it. But deeper and stronger than the imprints of sorrow and suffering, character was written on that face. You could not mistake it.

The day we met he was reading a light novel. His conversation was pleasant, mostly about travel and books. No word fell from his lips that would lead you to think that he was a Christian, and yet you knew it.

One morning he found me, in my deck-chair, reading my New Testament. He said, "I thought you must be a Christian."

"Yes," I answered, "and have you already had your morning devotion?"

The startled look on his face soon changed to one of incredible joy. "How do you know I ever have one?"

"Oh, I just know."

He sat down beside me. For a long time he seemed lost in thought. I knew that for some reason he was deeply moved. It was a very earnest face he

finally turned to me, and there was awe in his voice as he said, "What stronger evidence can anyone ever ask—for the reality of Christ—than His molding power in a life?"

I said that I knew of no better. He continued thoughtfully, "I have had many wonderful experiences in my Christian life, from that first overwhelming joy that filled the boy's heart, at conversion, and down through the years when I was privileged to preach His Word and lead others to Him; experiences of His all sufficiency, even in life's dark Gethsemane; but never have I known a joy as marvelously deep as this new realization that He, the great Master, the Matchless One, dwells in me."

Again he was silent, and I waited for the testimony I felt was coming.

"I have known sorrow," he said in a low voice, almost as though he were speaking to himself, "sorrow upon sorrow, bereavement after bereavement until I stood all alone among graves, and some of them never filling up. I thank Him for that knowledge, now. It gives me a right to say with some authority, 'There is but one sorrow, unendurable: Sin.' In each trial I found Him closer. Then this body of mine broke down." He looked at his slender, almost transparent hands. "It was terribly hard. But still He was near, I knew He could not fail. He did not, but I did. I sinned. My fellowship was gone, my power, my influence, my whole life, it seemed. What cared

people if my whole life before had been one long devotion. They could remember nothing but my fall. And what was worse, I could remember nothing else myself. Would not God forgive? Oh, yes, I knew He would, but somehow I could not accept it. I was crushed, beaten. I gave up. Never again did anyone find me as I found you, this morning, with the Bible in my hand. Was I ashamed of the Bible? Oh, no, but ashamed of myself that I had shamed it. I resolved never to return to the ministry—I am on my way even now, or rather was, to a new field of labor. Then God gave me this revelation. You are the third one on this trip who has told me that I am a Christian. I have not said a word about Him, His book, or work for Him, but they have found me out. I *am* a Christian.'' His voice was passionate now. ''I love Him and could never live without Him. Like a tree I have grown in Him so long that I can't be uprooted. But I felt that He could never again use me. And then He shows me that He looks out through me, even when I do not allow Him my lips for speaking.''

Again he was silent and bowed his head. ''Oh, this thing is beyond me! 'I am what I am by the grace of God.' During long years when my heart knew but one purpose He molded and made me for Himself. I am no longer my own. He lives in me. It has given me a new spring, a new aim, a new hope, a new self-respect,'' he said it humbly, ''not for

the self but the Christ in me. And above all, it has given me a new weapon. I can look the tempter in the face and say, 'I don't belong to you. You may fool me, trick me, trip me, but I don't belong to you. I am Christ's'."

* * *

Long after he left me I sat alone, looking out over the sunflooded sea, my thoughts enlarging upon this wonderful miracle of the indwelling Christ.

"As rays of light from yonder sun,
The flowers of earth set free,
So life and light and love came forth
From Christ living in me.

"As lives the flower within the seed,
As in the cone the tree,
So, praise the God of truth and grace,
His Spirit dwelleth in me.

"With longing all my heart is filled
That like Him I may be,
As on the wondrous thought I dwell
That Christ liveth in me."

"The Foolishness of God"

"PARDON me, Sir!"

The young principal of Silverton High School, coming down the walk with a bunch of papers under his arm, stopped and turned his keen, gray eyes questioningly on the stranger by the gate.

"I have waited here hoping to see you, Mr. Langdon. My name is Bruce. Since I heard you speak at the "Y", last week, I have had a great longing to have a talk with you. Could you spare the time?"

"Surely. Glad you came, Mr. Bruce. How would you like to join me in a hike down to the river? We can talk as we walk."

"It would suit me fine—if it is not—if I am not encroaching on your time."

"Not a bit of it. I do this 'most every day. You will pardon me a few moments while I dispose of these papers. My home is just around the corner."

Soon the two young men were on their way out of town, getting acquainted with each other in the frank, easy way of academics. When they had left the highway and entered the woods Langdon suddenly turned to his companion and said, "What is you problem, Bruce?"

"It is spiritual. When I heard you speak the other day I had a feeling that you have been through the same crisis. That's why I came. Isn't it true that you have not always been as positive in your belief as you are now?"

"It is quite true. I was once looked upon as an infidel."

"I don't believe you have ever been that. Few of us are, although at times it is very difficult to point out a single thing we do believe."

"I know. And we have a feeling that religious faith must be constructed somewhat like mathematics: axiom on axiom."

"Well, must it not?"

"Christianity is not a science—not even a principle: it is Life—spontaneous, irrepressible. To have that Life is the supreme axiom. Out of it will grow all the other "axioms", if you want that phrase."

"And when the Life is lacking?"

"You will dissect 'the form' and reject it—as you and I did. You will find that your most careful construction topples over."

"How can one get this Life?"

"Do you really want it?"

Bruce did not answer. They walked on in silence through the quiet woods. A squirrel scurried across their path. A bright colored woodpecker looked down on them from a straight, tall trunk. Ever nearer

and stronger came the deep, rumbling voice of the river, as it went singing down to the sea. When they reached the water's edge, they sat down on a big boulder, resting their feet against the trunk of a fallen tree. Then Bruce began to speak, deliberately choosing his words as if piecing together a jig-saw puzzle.

"Although I was brought up in an atmosphere of religion—for my father was a minister of the gospel—doubts early assailed me. Perhaps I have what has been termed a scientific turn of mind. I always wanted to reason things out, and what I could not reach by reasoning I rejected. Long before father knew it I had discarded his whole theology. Still I went to church—as I had always done—for the peace of the family. Often, to pass the time, I would listen carefully to the sermon and grammatically analyze its sentences. I was familiar with every doctrine of the Christian faith and knew great parts of the Scriptures by heart, but my inner being had never been touched. The going—first of mother, and a few months later of father—shook me out of indifference, and for the first time in my life I wished I could believe—as they believed.

"But soon my scepticism asserted itself anew. I read much and without discrimination, and further and further away I went from the old faith, the old book. Still, there were times when a great longing took hold of me for something *absolute,* some-

thing unchanging; more than an abstract ideal, more than a system of thought. But to go back! No! There must be a new way. I would find it. But I did not find it.

"Then I heard you. Because of what you apparently *are,* your message appealed to me. I thought of asking you, point blank, to show me the way you took, and now you tell me it is the old way, for what you call 'Life' must be what my father called regeneration.

"Do I want it? Admit that what I all these years have looked upon as foolishness is the Truth I am seeking?...."

He stopped speaking. Apparently a struggle was going on within. Both watched, in silence, the swift, dancing current of the river. A slight movement from his companion made Bruce turn to him. Langdon was opening a little pocket Testament.

"That's the trouble, Langdon, I can't read that book without feeling it is foolishness."

"Did you ever read this verse, 'The soulish man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, and he can not know them, because they are spiritually judged'?"

"Surely I have read it, but the way you read it, it sounds new."

"How does it strike you?"

"It supports your idea of the first fundamental —Life, and it explains why I can't get anything out of the Bible."

"Yes, and your impression of the Bible is, after all, not very original. You remember how Paul told the Corinthians nineteen hundred years ago that 'the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness'. But I fear we are sidestepping the real issue. What make you seek this 'foolishness'?"

"I am doubting my own doubts."

"And for the sake of fair play you come to me to get the viewpoint of one who believes?"

"That is only half the truth. The real reason for my coming is hunger for a clean, strong life and the realization that in myself I can not attain; that evil suggestions find response within me, and that without a lifting power I am going down, not up."

"But when you find that this 'lifting power' can only come through the old 'foolishness' then you hesitate?"

The words were spoken very softly and Langdon's arm went across the other's shoulder. "Bruce, 'the foolishness of God is wiser than men'. Prove Him! Take the one step that abandons self and embrace Him. It will not plunge you into a sea of fancy but put your feet on the unchanging Truth of the Rock of ages. He is the purity and strength for which you hunger. He is the power you need.

And He is here. Why talk about Him when we can talk to Him! Why not ask Him to speak! He will convince you. I do not ask you to accept a creed; I ask you to receive the Friend who died for you, and the creed will take care of itself. Won't you let me introduce you to Him?"

Bruce lifted a white, serious face, and the hand he put out trembled as he said, "Do, Langdon!"

* * *

When they arose from their knees the sun was setting in golden splendor, its rosy glow reflected from glistening foliage and rippling waves, but on the face of Bruce there shone a light not seen on earth or sky.

The Narrowness of the Cross

MISS Adams rose nervously from the half-written letter on her desk and walked over to the window. It was a delightful view that greeted her, for the appletrees in the old orchard below were covered with bloom, and their delicate petals seemed to absorb and reflect the rosy tint of the evening sky. Mingled with their fragrance came the indefinable, intoxicating smell of damp, newly turned soil. A gentle breeze carried a faint echo from the vesper-chimes of the mission, near the purple hills by the far horizon. But the watcher by the window, in her upper story of the old rancho, seemed untouched by all this entrancing appeal of color, fragrance and harmony. Even the new buildings, to the right and left of the orchard, with their glowing tile roofs and charming patios and balconies, failed to cast their spell of proud contentment.

Just when her cherished dream was beginning to materialize, this had to come! Everything had developed according to her carefully made plans. The donors had caught her vision of a reform-school for girls that would have nothing more than the prin-

ciple of reform in common with other reformatories. They had given her a free hand, unlimited authority. She was enabled to put to the test all her ideals and theories, her faith in humanity and her love for its unfortunate children.

The whole plan rested on her belief in three dominating influences of character building: heredity, environment and training. A child went wrong because one—or all three—of these influences had been wrong. It was possible to counterbalance a bad heredity by good environment and training. Yes, it was even possible to build up a strong, good character where all three influences had been wrong, for deep in the soul of mankind was "the divine spark", the latent consciousness of and aspiration for *goodness.* Awaken the soul, and it will begin to climb.

In accord with this belief the exterior and interior of the school had been planned and completed. The old rancho had been chosen for its atmosphere of homelike security. And the new buildings were true, in every line, to the Spanish type. Home-likeness and genteel simplicity prevailed throughout the dwelling-quarters, and the gymnasium, class-rooms and workshops left nothing to desire in equipment. The teaching-staff had also been chosen with utmost care.

But somehow the dream was not coming true. The living material had not responded to her touch.

It failed to take root and grow. It evaded her where she had been most sure of response. It took on a veneer of conformity while at heart it remained untouched. She had seen it in a thousand little ways. The theory was right, so the fault must be in her. Her own heredity and training separated her from them. She never could be one of them without a secret loss of self-respect. She never won their confidence. They had taught her a great deal about her own make-up, very little about themselves. In true humility and integrity of purpose she had then conceived the idea of a religious director. Another, with a deeper religious instinct, would accomplish what she had failed to do!

But where could she be found? She must be a woman spiritually wholesome, whose faith in God was not circumscribed by narrow sectarianism and literalness of interpretation. She was to be a big sister to the girls, as well as their teacher in religion. Miss Adams knew only one person that could help her find this ideal, her old counsellor and friend, Dr. E., who for over thirty years had been president of an eastern college. And Dr. E. had sent Elsie Rae.

Because Dr. E. had given his unqualified approval, Elsie Rae had been received and installed as religious director without a question. For that matter no one would think of questioning Elsie Rae. She inspired confidence as unconsciously as a flower

radiates fragrance. Without seeming effort she won every heart, because somehow she made everyone conscious of her own love and interest. In spite of her youth—for she was only two years out of college—she impressed one with a depth of understanding and sympathy only expected in the old.

With the coming of Elsie, Miss Adams had at last felt that her dream would materialize. Was it perhaps because she had been relieved of her responsibility in teaching a subject that more than any other reminded her of her failure as a reformer? She had put "religion" on the curriculum because she had hoped, under that subject, to get closest to the girls. And that was where she had suffered keenest. Or was it that Elsie had really brought a new spirit, a spirit of helpfulness and good will?

It was hard to say. But hope had been renewed, for there were indications of a real awakening in some of the girls.

Elsie had been left free, as were all the teachers, to experiment and work out her own ideas. Miss Adams had not even entered her class-room the first months. Her only contact with Elsie's "creed" was the morning devotion, attended by all. No book had yet been substituted for the Bible, she noted. And the prayer was always extemporaneous. It was that prayer that first caused her uneasiness. It was too personal. It overemphasized the mystical element. It gave

the impression that the Infinite God, the Supreme Goodness was a Person walking by our side, interested in the details of our little lives. It appealed too much to the emotions. And still, when that prayer was offered there was a stillness in the room that only profound reverence of the soul brings. Yes, she had that indefinable quality called personality. One by one the girls had been won until it seemed her influence was almost miraculous.

Yesterday, Miss Adams had visited her classroom. They had been studying the life of Christ and had now reached the crucifixion. The atmosphere of stillness prevailed throughout the hour. Was it teaching? Did it not come nearer to preaching? No, but it was intimately personal. It brought you face to face with that awful tragedy in such a way that you felt responsible for what happened two thousand years ago. As if *your* hand had raised that cross. And more terrible still, as if the great Christ was taking *your* place on that cross. Did intelligent people still believe that? Did Elsie Rae not realize how opposed her teaching was to the principles and ideals of the school? True, she had never been questioned, never asked to give her religious views, but she was too intelligent not to understand.

What was to be done? What effect would her removal have upon the girls? . . . A great weariness came over her. If Elsie could only be made to see how absurd this literal interpretation was!

In the evening Miss Adams had gone to Elsie's room to have a talk with her but found the room crowded with girls, kneeling in prayer. She stood a few moments outside the open door and listened. Then quietly she moved away. At the far end of the corridor she heard them softly sing, "Beneath the cross of Jesus". Strangely shaken, she returned to her own rooms.

Tonight Elsie would come in answer to her summons. If she could only make her see!

The short twilight was fast deepening into darkness when Miss Adams turned from the window and switched on the light. At the same time she heard Elsie's knock on the door and bade her come in.

"Did you wish to see me, Miss Adams?"

"Yes. Won't you sit down?"

There was a pause. Miss Adams toyed nervously with a letter-opener. On Elsie's face there was a look of expectancy but no trace of uneasiness.

"I went to your room last night."

"Did you! Was it when we had our good-night service? I did not see you."

"No, you were evidently having a regular Salvation Army prayer-meeting. I did not wait till it was over."

Again there was a pause.

"How long has this been going on, Miss Rae?"

"Do you mean the prayer meetings?"

"Yes."

"We have had informal little gatherings almost every night since I came—during the social hour, but only the last week have we had prayer-meetings."

"And you are encouraging it?"

"I dare not stop it."

"What do you mean?"

"I believe God is in it. It is spontaneous. I feel more like one led than a leader."

"You have given me a shocking surprise. I have been under the impression that you were broad-minded and sane, in full sympathy with the new thinking of a new day, and here I find you turning our school into a hot-bed of fanaticism. I feel that I have the right to ask an explanation."

"Surely, Miss Adams! And had you asked that explanation six months ago it would have been gladly given, and would not have differed from the one given today. My belief has not changed, it has only deepened."

"What is your belief?"

"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and my Savior, who died for my sin—and the sin of all the world—thus bridging the gulf between God and man. I believe He rose from the dead. I believe everything He of Himself declared. My Master could not deceive."

"Not even Himself?"

"No, for in deceiving Himself He would have deceived two millenniums, and that is unthinkable."

"Then you believe in the inspiration of the whole Bible?"

"I do. I can find no method of valuation that enables me to take out one part without undermining the whole. I know it from experience. If I am not sure of God's word I am sure of nothing."

"And is it nothing to you that the whole intellectual world of today is against you?"

"The 'intellectual world' has no comfort to offer when the eye-lids of my loved ones are closed by death. It has no light to bring when sorrow's darkness closes 'round me. It gives no hope, no forgiveness when sin has devastated all my life. It offers no security when my day here is ended. What abiding value has it then that I should seek its approval?"

"Surely you don't mean to say that your way is the only way?"

"If there is another way than Jesus Christ, who of Himself said that He is 'The Way' then I have failed to find it. Point it out to me that I may determine its worth."

"Seemingly it is useless to argue the point. Of course, you must realize that this is not the sort of thing I wanted for my girls. I must say, though, that I am extremely sorrow. You have personality,

and your influence is very remarkable; if you would only moderate your teaching, make it more objective."

"Do you believe that I follow my conviction, Miss Adams?"

"Surely There can be no question about that. You certainly have my full respect, on that point."

"Thank you. But now you propose that I compromise with my conviction and so risk your respect on the only point I have it."

"No, no! Please don't misunderstand me. Anyone with your training and intelligence must realize that no honest soul can persistently hold that it has found the *whole* Truth and so condemn every other conception of Truth. Besides, what right do we have to force our particular view on someone else? Must we not grant the young people the right to compare and choose?"

"Yes, we must. But how could they possibly catch a glimpse of Him, the supreme Personality, except through another personality? And how could he, who once has had a vision of Him, ever speak of Him except with a burning heart? If you have found Him to be the Truth, how can you ever speak as if the truth were to be found elsewhere? How can anyone in this world of uncertainty and change with certainty *know* anything? Science answers all my soul's great questions with a simple, 'We

don't know'. Philosophy builds one system of thought after another—all of them resting on unanswerable questions. Nowhere certainty, nowhere rest. Everywhere unrest, discontent, fear. But if I—out of this chaos—hear a voice, free from all uncertainty, say, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth', must I not listen? And if I begin to investigate and find that the one who speaks has lost all that man values, home, family, fortune, friendship, esteem, health, would I not take his word to heart and seek to know his secret?

"Or if I saw a shackled prisoner in a Roman dungeon, who, facing Nero's axe, could smile and say, 'I know whom I have believed', and looking back over his life's work threatened by dissension and false teachers, 'Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure', would I not be a fool if I did not seek an explanation?

"And if I heard the voice that ever puts hypocrisy to silence say, 'Come, I have rest! Come, I am the Water of Life you need, the Bread you hunger for, the Truth you seek, the Power you never had.' And if I see Him 'lifted up' a curse—for me—should I not heed Him? And when I have tried Him and found that He is all He of Himself declares—how can I then in anything that touches Him be 'objective'? Ask John the Baptist to modify his message! Ask Paul to compromise! Ask Christ

to retract His life, His teaching, His death, His resurrection!

"No, Miss Adams, I can't remain if my hands are to be tied when I would point the girls to the only One who can re-make their lives. I have—unintentionally—disappointed you, I can not deliberately choose to disappoint the Master."

"You are a born fanatic."

"Perhaps so. If to follow your conviction without compromise is fanaticism I shall not mind to be so classified. *'I know'* is a great message. Don't you think so?"

"How many will believe it?"

"A fact is a fact whether accepted or not. It can be proven. Coming to Christ, personally, is proof."

"You almost make me wish....But suppose you should come to the close of your life and find that after all you had followed a dream?"

"Had I then lost anything worth having? I can see only one alternative behind your fictitious 'if'. Either eternity is far more glorious than my dream—and if so the winning is all mine—or it is a void, a great nothingness, and in that case I have—in contrast with the sceptic—won all that is possible to win, for to me there was no 'if' with its paralyzing fear, and my life had a purpose that gave meaning even to sorrow and pain."

"It wasn't the winning I thought of—but—the Truth!"

* * *

A few minutes later Elsie stood by the window in her own room and looked up to the far-away stars. "It wasn't the winning I thought of, but the Truth" kept ringing in her mind. Habitually, her thoughts took the form of prayer, "Oh Master, will you who fill my whole horizon so that all that touches my life finds its value in its relationship to Thee, grant that I may—not merely win but fight a good fight!"

The Story of Westfir

"They shall walk and not faint." Is. 40:31.

THE real story of Westfir we shall never know until we see with the clarified vision of Eternity. Our many questions find few and unsatisfying answers. It is like the place you live in: full of challenging opportunities, manyfold temptations, disheartening failures and multitudinous duties. To an outsider, and at a proper distance, it looks like an adventure, but you and I know better. We know it is more like the slow, weary walk under the burning sun, the walk Isaiah speaks of, that is made possible only by the strength that comes from a quiet, persistent waiting upon the Lord.

Would you like to see my Westfir? You would have to spend the night in Eugene, the beautiful university town, and board the one train, coming our way, at 7:30 in the morning, on the new Southern Pacific line to California, over the Cascades. I hope you choose to come in early spring, when the wild currant sings its rosy song on every hill-side, and the dog-wood's dazzling white against a background of somber cedar and spruce speaks of purity and

hope, and with the trilliums leading in the doxology. I hope you come when the peach, and prune and apple orchards are abloom. I hope you come when the rhododendrons fill your heart with wonder.

Steeper and higher grows the rocky wall, as you near Westfir, shutting out the view, and soon you are carried into the darkness and chill of a long tunnel. You are thankful for the little flickering jets, lit by a thoughtful brakeman, and are reminded of life's sudden emergencies and dark passes, that call forth and test your resources. Coming out of the darkness, you are dazzled by the sunlight on the swift river, and captivated by the beauty and majesty of the hillsides and the fairness of the valley. While still meditating over the symbolism in the changing panorama, you suddenly face the imposing mill-plant, and your train stops before the neat little depot at Westfir.

You see a little valley, shut in on every hand by steep, fir-covered hills. Your eye takes in the log-covered river, the uniform rows of "bunk-houses", the "cook-house", "commissary" and "office" buildings. Then, if you are walking with me along the high railroad-bank, you will stop and gaze at "the Camp", below you. A smile will light up your face. You never saw such a town. It looks as though a giant boy had been playing on a mountain-top with little toy-houses, huts and tents of his own making, and suddenly, grown tired of the play, had

thrown a hundred, or more, down the valley, and left them where they fell. But as you look, there may be a catch in your throat and a pull at your heart-strings, for you remember that the patched shacks and flapping canvas are "homes" to hundreds of people. They are fine, honest wage-earners, people with the spirit of the pioneer; people who would rather "rough it" in the free, wild west than shut themselves up within narrow city-walls. Their children are as lovely as any children, anywhere, and as well (or ill) behaved.

But you want to know something about the living Westfir, its spiritual need, and my part in it. Follow me down the steep bank into my little cabin, and I will tell you how and why I am here. Do not look so comprehensively at my dwelling. It will not cave in. It just has an alarming tendency of leaning forward, but it is perfectly safe. Should a shower come, I will pick you out a spot where the roof, so far, has not leaked.

It was the first Sunday in September, 1924, I came up to Westfir to visit a brother I had not seen for a quarter of a century. We were eating our breakfast, when I heard a school-bell ring. "What is it?" — "Oh, some little girls are playing Sunday School."—I excused myself, left my coffee and hurried, without Bible, collection or hat, dressed in camping-garb, to the boarded-up, barnlike schoolhouse. If they were playing, they played in real

earnest, and earnestly I entered into their play. The following Sunday they played church with me. Things happened. More men and women than children were present. Extra boxes and boards were brought in. A little girl led the singing. We had no instrument. The simple gospel message met with response. How they listened! How firm and true were the hand-grasps, after the service!

"I haven't attended service for four years." "This is a real treat in a lumber-camp." "I hope you will speak again."

I did speak again. The following Wednesday afternoon every seat in the schoolroom was filled with women. We talked about the value of Bible-study and took a birds-eye view of the Gospel of John. That was the beginning of a Bible class that for two winters has been, to so many of us, a source of real helpfulness and blessing. For a while we met in an old tent, around a home-made table, with boxes and boards for seats. Later, when I got my own little cabin, we met there. It was ever informal, heart-to-heart talks, mostly, looking at our problems in the light of the Word, and taking them to Him, in prayer. Some learned to pray, there; others were awakened to their need, and all of us had new visions.

At that first Bible-study a campaign was started to raise money for an organ. In two weeks we had the organ.

The Sunday school grew rapidly and the Sunday evening service was well attended.

I had postponed my return to Portland until the end of September. Before I left I called all the Christians to a prayer-meeting. Here I reminded them of the wonderful opportunities that were theirs for service, and urged them to organize for the purpose of lifting up Christ in Westfir. And so the Westfir Christian's Union was born. Next day, just before my train pulled out, one woman, more deeply stirred than the others, asked me, "Is there no one I could write to, asking that you be sent here as our worker?" I said, "I know of no one but will do all in my power to send someone to you. We must pray much about it."

After another month I knew that Westfir was my field. The assurance came in prayer and was affirmed through circumstances. My decision to return was made before I knew the source of my support. Then one day a letter came, from Westfir, containing a list of subscriptions, amounting to about $30.00 a month, and the question, "Would you consider coming here, on this support?" I said yes, and thanked God. Then, because His measure is always "exceeding abundantly" He put His hand upon me and blessed me, through one of His own beloved servants, Dr. W. B. Hinson. Since then He has taken His servant home, but I still feel around me, when difficulties arise and temptations abound,

the sacred atmosphere of that benediction. I stood in his study, before the fireplace, to bid him good-bye. With one hand grasping mine and the other on my shoulder he said, "Anna, you have been singularly led to that place. God has a work for you there, and He will give you strength." Then he bowed his silvery head and prayed. Many times afterwards I marveled at that prayer, how it foresaw situations and testings. How intimately near it brought the Savior! More than once, that first winter, as I stood up on the hillside overlooking the camp, and saw the stars appear, one by one, and the little lights in the huts below, the loneliness and strangeness of it all took hold of me, and the tempter was near, "No, you can't do it. Only a woman! What have you to give these sturdy men of the timber and river? What point of contact have you with women whose whole beings are wrapped up in the things you never knew?" Then I would feel, again, the touch of a warm, strong hand, and stand by the old fireplace. But the vision changed: A stronger One than Dr. Hinson walked with me down the valley, never to leave.

Each time I came into Portland I was reassured and strengthened through a visit with the strong man in the little study. He had a way of knowing things. I never brought a financial problem to him but he would suddenly demand, "Anna, how much money have you?" And when I did not answer he would smile with those kindly blue eyes and say,

"Oh yes, you have to tell me, you know." And how graciously he gave. "You take this and buy something you can keep." And all the time he knew that the money would go to some necessity.

So my "Story of Westfir" could not be written without mentioning him whose wise counsel, inspiring books, warm friendship and generous heart enabled me to go and endure.

And while I am telling how God through circumstantial evidence brought the full conviction to my own heart that the work I had undertaken was His work for me, I must not fail to mention the part Dr. John Timothy Stone, of the Fourth Presbyterian Church, Chicago, had in that work. His personal, and altogether unexpected gift of $200.00 during the first few months of my ministry, not only brought glad assurance to my own heart and mind but also helped in a very marked way to establish, among the people, confidence and respect for the work. Although they were not as outspoken as my brother, I knew from their attitude that they shared his sentiment when he said, "He is a good man, and he certainly trusts you."

The money was put aside as a nucleus for a building-fund. There it stood for a year, untouched. Then I suffered a severe physical break-down, and, urged by friends in Westfir, I took—with aching heart—this money to build up not a church, but my health, through rest and medical aid.

And perhaps it would be well to add a personal testimony here, as many will undoubtedly wonder how Dr. Stone came to know about the work.

It was through his ministry I was led out of agnosticism and into acceptance of Christ, in 1913. To me he was "a great fact pointing to Christ", and his interest in individuals, regardless of social standing, revealed to me the shallowness of my socialistic prejudices. Since then he has been to me father, teacher and friend whose spiritual counsel and practical outlook, as well as his ever ready sympathy and thoughtfulness have steaded my nerve and gladdened my heart in many a crisis throughout the years. In spite of his big and ever growing work he has found time to keep in touch with one of the least of his flock. And so he knew about Westfir.

The Free Church in Portland, under the ministry of Rev. Eugene Wernberg, and the Whatsoever Class of the Hinson Memorial Baptist Church, with Mrs. Hinson as teacher, also greatly assisted me in the work. And one day, when my cupboard was as empty as that of "mother Hubbard", and the thought came that perhaps, at last, the Master would grant me the privilege of sacrificing for Him, a check for $25.00 came from the Head-office of the Free Church, and with it a very encouraging letter from our Superintendent of Missions.

And so in various ways, and through widely different channels He cared for His child and His work. And now the work is still growing, under His care, and He still cares for His child, although separated from that work.

Should I make an application? It is said that only stupid people need them. Thoughtful people will make their own, and you are not stupid, so I leave it with you.

Another Chance

(An Incident from Westfir.)

THE camp was astir. Lumberjacks were hurrying to make their train. Dogs were barking, babies crying. There was a smell of frying bacon and hotcakes afloat in the air. As I sat down to my solitary breakfast I heard excited voices on my front-porch. There was a knock. I opened the door and looked, surprised, into the faces of two young girls, who for the last few months had disregarded my every invitation to attend a service in the schoolhouse. I did not need to wait for an explanation. It came in a gasp, from both. "Do you have any pink baby-ribbons? Brown's baby is dead. We want to fix him up. The mother is carrying on something awful. We want to help." I had no pink baby-ribbons. They went and I closed the door.

I don't know how long I stood there, gazing into space, trying to connect pink baby-ribbons with a mother's first uncontrollable grief at the loss of her first-born, but suddenly I was startled by another knock. A timid, uncertain sort of knock it was. The man who entered upon my invitation was too tall

to walk with unbent head through my door. He stood there as timid as his knocks had been, fingering the red hat the lumberjacks wear during the hunting season. From his stooping shoulders down to his dragging feet he seemed to ask an apology. In spite of his generous blonde mustache his face was a little boy-face, complexion pink-and-white, forehead high, wavy blonde hair, blue eyes with a helpless pleading in them.

"Are you the lady minister?"

"Yes."

"Our boy died last night. He was never sick, but this morning he was dead. We . . . we can't . . . we wonder if . . . if you would officiate at the funeral?"

"Why, where are you going to bury him? Aren't you taking him out on the train? There is no cemetery here, you know."

"I know. We will take him up to a private burying ground in the hills, near O. We . . . you see . . . I have been out of work so long. Woods laying off now two months. We can't take him out."

"Of course, I will help you."

I walked with him over to the little shack he called home. It was close to the school-house, one of four huddled so close together that a whisper could be heard from one to the other. As we walked I thought of their coming to camp, three months before. Two families in an old Ford; a few bundles

tied to the runningboard; Mrs. B. nothing but a dimpled child with laughing eyes. The other woman had had a pinched and faded look.—Her baby forever crying. They lived together in the dark, one-room shack. And in that same room six weeks later, Brown's baby was born. As I now entered the house I noticed it had been partitioned off so that each family had a 7x12 room. The neighbors were all there, but with the fine instinct of the simple folk they left as I entered. The terror stricken little mother sobbed out her grief on my shoulder. — "He never cried, last night. This morning I put out my hand to feel if the covers were all right. And—then—his little head was like ice. Oh God! My baby, my beautiful baby boy!"

I walked over to the built-in-bunk and turned back the blanket. A perfect baby. Just asleep, it seemed.

It was the first funeral in camp, and everybody was there. A neighbor had opened her house, because it afforded more room. There was an old out-of-tune organ, in a corner. Some one played on it. Two women sang, "God will take care of you," and we all sang, "What a friend we have in Jesus." But the words were drowned in tears and sobs.

I stood there before the little flower-covered casket, in the middle of the room, the only tearless, silent one. How could I bring them a message? Then in my great weariness and perplexity I was suddenly

aware of the unseen Presence. I knew then that He would speak—and make them hear.

"Friends!" I waited for the appeal to penetrate. Tearstained faces were lifted—expectantly. "Once there was a room, very much like this, only the dead one was a little girl. The neighbors had all come to weep with the parents, when into the room One entered who said, "Don't weep! She is not dead. She only sleeps." And He went up and took the girl's hand and raised her up, calling her name and gave her back to her mother. That same One, Jesus Christ, is here now. He wants to speak to you, through me. Will you let Him?"

And in the awed hush He spoke of His victory over death, of His loving, loosing, lifting power. And they listened. The hush was still unbroken when the little casket was carried out.

On the muddy, steep mountain road the bereaved mother told me why her heart was broken.

"You see, God took him. He took him, because we failed to keep our promise. We wanted a boy. I prayed it would be a boy. I promised I would ever live for God, if my prayer was answered. I would bring my boy up for Him. You see, I have been in the Army, my husband, too. We used to wear uniforms, sing on the street-corners, speak to people about God. But after we got married we just drifted, never thought of God . . . My prayer was more than answered. It was such a strong, beautiful boy.

God did all I asked, but I—I—we—failed Him. Every Sunday morning I heard your Sunday school bell; every Sunday evening your singing. But we never went, never even thought of going. Now God has taken our boy. It's only fair. We are in wrong."

"Yes, I think you are. What are you going to do about it?"

She glanced furtively at her husband, who was sitting at my right, in the back-seat of the car. He turned and looked out through the side-curtains.

"It is not for me to say that God has taken your baby because of your failure to live up to a promise given Him. He only knows why. But one thing I know beyond the shadow of a doubt: He loves you, He is seeking your best, and He is going to give it to you insofar as you let Him."

After a few moments' silence I asked, "Were you perfectly happy drifting away from God?" They both shook their heads.—"No, no one ever is. There may be a gay carelessness—outwardly—but only disquietude within. One who has known intimate fellowship with Christ can never be happy separated from Him. In your great sorrow He is very near, yearning to meet your deepest need."

We left the cars on the road and walked the last mile through the woods. There was a little green opening, in the timber, on the top of a hill. Two or three wooden crosses, on grass covered mounds, were to be seen, and two men and some women around a

newly dug grave. As we approached them I said quietly to my companions, "We will have a few moments of silent prayer, at the grave. Speak to God, then! Tell Him what is in your heart!"

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust. As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children."—"I am the resurrection and the life . . ." They came to us, the everlasting words, on the breeze blown over the sea and a thousand hilltops. They came from the whispering spruce and pine. They came from a million open graves, in millenniums past. They re-echoed —as mighty organ-music—in the heart within.

The short service was ended. Soon there was a fresh mound with a fresh little wooden cross. Still we lingered. Again I spoke out of the fullness of my heart. "We are going back to camp—to the life we must live. We are leaving behind us a little grave. Our coming to it has added to our responsibility. The life we go back to must be lived truer, stronger, purer because of this little grave, that has opened our eyes once more to the uncertainty of all the things we cherish, down here, and the certainty

of the great eternal things. If we are going to live a better, truer life, we can't go alone. We must go led by the One who knows the way. Shall we tarry a moment and silently—each—by himself—ask Him to forgive our failure and guide us in His own way?

No sound from the highway of men reached us. In the deep silence the heart reached out for God.

And the pine and spruce softly whispered the benediction.

Playing Mother

IT had rained and rained, for weeks and weeks. No one remembered when it hadn't, it seemed. The water stood ankle-deep in ruts and hollows on the road, where it had not formed impassable puddles. One had to jump and skip on stumps and rocks to keep the muddy water out of the shoes. But suddenly, one March afternoon, there was a rent in the leaden gray of the sky. A ray of sunshine peeped out, and the incessant, monotonous patter of rain ceased. How magnanimous is the smile of Oregon when the sun breaks through the clouds! The new-bathed world looks like a splendid Christmas-tree all bedecked with diamonds. Every quivering little drop has its own rainbow.

I was out on my usual afternoon round through the camp. A nod here, a friendly word there, and longer visits in some of the shacks. Carefully I was picking my way around an unusually big puddle, in front of a group of shanties, when suddenly a door was jerked open and a deluge of dishwater just missed me. Gasping, Mrs. B. stood in the door, "O, Miss Lindgren, did it . . . did I . . ."

"No, it didn't, and you didn't. It's all right."

I crossed the road to her side, and she said, "Have you heard about the terrible condition the Murphy family is in? They haven't a decent covering for the beds, no clothes to wear, no food, no wood, and now they are quarantined; the man was taken to the hospital yesterday, spinal meningitis, they say. Six children and another coming. Poor, poor woman! What will she do? There is no hope for him, they say."

"We must help them."

"Yes! The truck-boys have been around the camp getting a lot of bedding and clothes. They had to leave it outside the house."

"Where do they live?"

"A mile or more down the river, across the big bridge, you know. But you can't visit them. The office won't let you."

"Thank you for telling me about it. I will drop in to the office and see what can be done."

The head book-keeper who was alone in the office, confirmed the story. It was spinal meningitis. The woman was rather hysterical, and the children were seemingly all sick, perhaps only colds, but one could never tell. There had been no sanitation. All lived in an eight by twelve shanty. I asked him to tell the superintendent when he came in that should he want someone to go down there and help he could send for me.

"But you would have to be quarantined with them!"

"I know."

"It's a one room shanty, and they say . . . It's . . . Well, all right, I'll tell him."

I had not been home more than five minutes when the superintendent called to see me.

"You are lifting a load from my shoulders. I didn't suppose there was a woman in camp who would do it. Murphy is dead. We just got word. Some one will have to tell the woman. I couldn't. It's a woman's job. It'll be a terrible shock. The doctors in the hospital tell us that she can come down to the funeral if proper care is taken. She must be treated with disinfectants and put on clothes that have not been in the house. You will take care of that, I know, and if there is anything that we can do to help you, you only have to tell us."

"I shall need a cot and bedding for myself, and some disinfectants. After I get there I will know better what is needed. I will see about having a change of clothes sent out to Mrs. M. tomorrow, and perhaps you will arrange with a truck-driver to call for her before train-time?"

"Oh, yes! I'll see to that. Dr. T. will be here in about half an hour. You had better see him about some disinfectants and other precautions for yourself and the family."

While waiting for the doctor I walked over to my faithful friend, Mrs. K., whose unselfish devotion, generosity and practical helpfulness were to me a daily source of gladness and strength. She most decidedly opposed my going, but when I remained firm she took the lead in organizing and managing outside help. It was through her resourcefulness and co-operation that the mothering of six small children and a helpless mother was made possible.

As we together walked over to the general office all our plans and concern for the Murphy family were suddenly swept to the background, for down the northern slope, towards the bunkhouses, came a procession that engaged all our powers of sympathy and emotion. A group of loggers carried, on a stretcher, down the steep, rough trail, one of their own. He had come on the morning train; a boy in his early twenties, had been put on the roll and started working after the noon hour. Five minutes later a log, on its downward rush touched him and hurled him into eternity.

Before we reached the office the five o'clock whistle blew, and soon the men from the mill came filing past. Among them was the father of the boy. He was called aside, and doctor T. told him. Years have passed since then, but as vividly as if it had happened yesterday I can see before me the tearless, voiceless white agony of that father's grief.

When doctor T. reached us he said, "I have to do it often, but I never get used to it. Poor old fellow! It took him hard." And shudderingly, with a prayer for strength, I thought of my own errand to a mother of six fatherless children.

That evening, at supper table in my brother's home, I faced unexpected opposition. "Of course," he said in his straightforward, dear way, "you are your own boss. I have no authority over you. If I did, you would not go." Nevertheless he picked up my bag, when the truck-driver came for me, and jumped up in the rear, while I took the seat by the driver. The night was clear and still with a promise of frost. I learned something about trucks that night. If you can manage to hold on, you can plunge right ahead, regardless of stumps and rocks and roadless tracks. Just hold on and keep going and you will get there.

We had to run up on the hill, past the bunkhouses, to reach the store or laundry-room, for my bed. Right by the door, so close that the men had to step over it to get into the room, lay the body of the dead boy. When the boys, living in the bunkhouses, saw the light, they came filing out to see what was happening. Silently they huddled together in front of that door. Someone lifted the sheet, then quickly dropped it, but all got a glimpse of the bruised, still face. What was in their minds? I am not sure, but perhaps their thoughts were not

far from mine, for when I quietly said, "Boys, don't you think it is well to prepare for an emergency like this?" I could detect nothing but fear and awe in their upturned faces. Someone on the far end whispered a question, and I heard another say something about "preacher lady" and "Murphy's kids." News travels fast in the shut-in-ness of our little world.

"Preacher-lady"! How often I had heard that phrase already, and how many and varied had been my reactions! It took me long before I could courageously face the reality it implied. Since then I have learned to listen to it as a guide to the speaker's attitude. This night there was a touch of homage in it that made my soul strong.

How our noisy approach and blazing head-lights must have startled the people in the little shanty! When we drew near the only window was full of faces, pressed close against the pane. I asked the men to wait while I went in to explain things. As I opened the door the mother was sitting on a box by the stove, and all the children clung close to her.

"Good evening, Mrs. Murphy! How are you?"

"Don't feel extry good, and the kids are all ailing. I thought they wouldn't let nobody come to see me."

"Well, they let me come. I thought you might feel lonesome and sad so I asked them to let me

come and stay with you a while. Do you think you would care to have me?''

''I sure would, but . . . we don't have much room . . . and — —'' She broke off and looked at the bunks, by the long wall, two double-deckers, taking up almost half of the room. ''It's all right. I brought my own bed and things. I'll ask brother to bring it.'' He brought it and paused long enough in the open door to take in the appalling details of the room: the half-naked, ragged children, one after the other going into fits of coughing, the disheveled woman, the burned-out stove spilling hot ashes on the bare, black floor, the heaps of dirty rags on the bunks, and the revolting smell of filth. Then he gave me one long, despairing look, held my hand a long moment and went away without a word. A deep, tender gladness filled me as I closed the door and turned to the strange task before me. Out there walked a strong, sturdy brother to whom my life was precious, and in here was the Savior of men, asking to use my hands for a touch of love. I felt very rich.

The old, tried, get-acquainted way with children of telling a story once more proved good. We soon were friends, and the ordeal of learning to gargle and take medicine was managed without very many tears. When all the tots had been put to bed, and one after the other had dropped off to sleep, I pulled a box close up to the mother and told her—as ten-

derly as I could—of the sorrow that had come to her. She did not seem to grasp it. She stared at me blankly, uncomprehendingly, as if I spoke a language she did not know. Instead of the hysteria I had expected there was the temporary paralysis that a great shock often brings. Without a word, and without undressing she crawled into bed with the children.

There had been no room to put up my cot until all had gone to bed. I now made it up, put out the light—a little kerosene lamp with a broken, smoky chimney, and went to bed. The window could not be opened, but the wide cracks in the board-walls furnished ventilation, and through them I watched with sleepless eyes the distant, shining stars. There was a consciousness of His presence such as I have seldom known. How I thanked Him for the stable and the manger! I saw as never before, in them, the gracious touch of love. Never a home so lowly but that the Savior of the stable could be received, and I caught a new glimpse of what that stable must have meant to the infinite God. Before such self-emptying my heart must bow in speechless worship.

Suddenly the silence was broken by sobs and moans that grew louder and more violent. Throughout the night she kept on crying until I mentioned that she could go down to the funeral. It quieted her instantly. She had married when she was only fifteen, and mentally she was still a child.

We had a busy day before us and began it with the dawn. Water had to be carried a quarter of a mile, and we were in for such a house-cleaning as Mrs. M. had never dreamt of seeing. All usable bedding was hung out in the sun, the soiled clothing put to soak, and all the rest piled up in a huge bonfire. The bunks were stripped of their moldy contents, and every plank in the shanty scrubbed with strong disinfectants. It seemed to me there was enough filth in and around that house to kill an army.

The friends, in camp, brought up a change of clothing for Mrs. M. such as any ordinary woman would be proud to own. They had even thought of an over-night case with all belongings, including a toothbrush (I often wondered what she did with it). After she had been bathed, and put on the new clothes, she evidently felt as respectable as she looked. The shanty was near the railroad, and we were all lined up, waving to her, as the train passed.

In the afternoon we filled the bunks with fresh spruce-boughs and bedding—the children helping—and carried enough water to bathe the family, and when we were ready, it was dusk.

There was only one boy in the brood, five-year old David, a thoughtful, intelligent child, full of questions and wonderment. He never left my side. Faithfully he trotted along with his little lard-pail to help carry water. When we made our last trip

to the spring that night he said, "Dad is dead, isn't he?"—"Yes, Dave."—"I know, mom told me. You knew it a long time, didn't you?"—"I knew it before mother."—"Yes, 'cause you told her. An' tomorrow they are putting him down in a hole in the ground, ain't they?" The last words were whispered in a voice hoarse with intensity and horror. He looked up pleadingly, as if there must be another possibility. I said, "Yes, Dave, they put the body in the grave, not the real Daddy."—"Oh, don't they bury the whole thing?"—Who could help smiling! Yet, who would dare to, looking into that earnest, pleading face! We set down our buckets to rest, and I took his little hand in mine and said, "What is this?"—"It's my hand."—"It isn't you then?"—"No, it's my hand."—"And what is this?" The smile on his face broadened. "It's my ear."—"And what is this?"—"Ah, my nose!"—"And it isn't you?"—"No, just my nose."—"Well, where are you, then?"—"Don't know. Inside, mebbee."—"Yes, the body is just the house we live in. The real person moves out, when death comes, and goes to live in another world."—"Is it a real nice place?"—"There is a place there more beautiful than anything on earth. The streets are made of pure gold, and the doors of shining stones. And no one ever is sick there, and death can not come there. It is the city where God lives. Would you like to hear the story about how God made a way so that all

that want to can get there?''—''Yes, tell it!''—''We will tell it to-night so that all the children can hear it.''—''Did Dad know the way?''—''I don't know, Dave.''—''Will you stay with us always?''—''No, not always. I must go home.''—''Do you have a little boy, too?''—''No, I have no little boy.'' —''I like you. Why can't you stay always?''

After all had been bathed and dressed in some sort of night-garb, we sat down around the stove for our story. Two were in my lap, David close to me, to one side, his little arm around my back, the others on the floor before me. In the simplest words I told the story of the coming of Christ to earth, and of His death on the cross to make the way. They listened spellbound, only the babies, on my lap, asleep. And then we knelt in prayer. (Before I left, all had learned to say ''Now I lay me down to sleep''.)

There was a mountain of empty tin-cans outside the shanty that told its own version of why an income of six dollars a day did not suffice to keep poverty outside the door. When Mrs. M. came back I tried to give her a simple lesson in home-economics and show her the food-value and money-saving of vegetable-stew, beans, cooked cereals and dried fruit as compared to fancy canned goods and ready-to-eat breakfast-foods. I do not know if she learned the lesson, for through the generosity of the camp the whole family was dressed up and ticketed back to

her home, in the eastern part of the state. But that is another story.

When finally word came that I could return to camp, I was glad. Mrs. M. played the courteous hostess, "You need not hurry away. If you enjoy yourself you are welcome to stay." I thanked her and said that as long as there was no one to preach, while I was gone, perhaps I had better not be selfish.

Brother called for me, and hand in hand, as in childhood days, we walked home. When we reached camp, the Superintendent stood in the road and uncovering his head (a very unusual thing with him) he said, in putting out his hand, "You have made me feel that there is a kind of Christianity that is real." I said, "There is only one kind, and it is real."

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